Why Love Grows Cold

Ellen Burns Sherman

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BY

ELLEN BURNS SHERMAN

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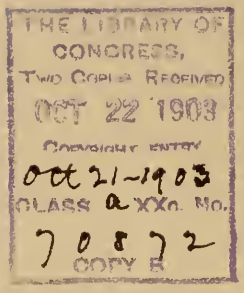

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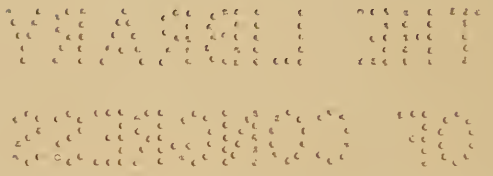

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I am indebted to the proprietors of *The Lamp* and *The Critic* for courteous permission to include in this volume two essays which first appeared in those publications. Acknowledgments are also due to *The Criterion* for permission to plagiarize a few paragraphs from an article of mine which was published in its columns.

E. B. S.

DEDICATED TO MY BROTHER

Charles Rollin

AND HIS WIFE

Maude

JUST A FEW OF THE REASONS WHY LOVE GROWS COLD.

(The looker-on sees more of the game than the players.)

When one speaks of a rose, he may not immediately think of the endless variations in size, color, fragrance and petal-formation which are found in the rose family,—from the simple wild flower to the deep-dyed Jacqueminot, clad in the rich complexity of its countless petals. And when one speaks of love, he seldom stops to consider the wide diversity of emotional coloring and fragrance which that term is made to cover—from the crude affinity of Maggie and Dennis to the intricate soular fusion of a Twentieth Century Margaret and her Reginald. For evolution has revealed the more delicate

workings of its laws in nothing so clearly as in the expansion and refinement of what is known, or unknown, as love.

If one reads the romances of long ago, in which the heroine seldom speaks except in a sweet dialect of dimples, or the histories of his discreetly remote ancestors, he will find evidence enough to convince him that the difference between love, as it was in the beginning and now is, in its highest state, is the difference between the elementary music of the first monochord and the complex harmonies of a modern piano.

In the contemplation of this finer emotional efflorescence, one would like to feel an unqualified gladness, nor let his pleasant fancies be tripped up by such dogging maxims as, "For everything you gain you lose something." But, alas! is it not so? Does not the increasing complexity of love, like the increasing com-

plexity of everything else, make it the more easily deranged?

Simple-hearted Addie, whose family crest is a washboard, once confessed to the writer that she "never begrudged the day" she "took Jim." "We've been married eleven years now," was the ingenuous explanation, "and I ain't seen that man full yet."

Verily, little satisfieth her that requireth little.

"In the good old days," writes the brilliant author of "The Ascent of Woman," "a girl embarked on her first passion with the firm conviction that it was going to last a lifetime, and, as a result, it frequently did." But in these days of fearful enlightenment there is a very natural trepidation on the part of lovers, who stand and tremble on the brink and fear to launch away. For however much at variance in some respects may be the

testimony of those amorous experts, the poets and novelists, or the data furnished by the profane biographies of one's friends and kinsmen, on one characteristic of love there seems to be a painful unanimity of opinion; namely, its tendency to grow cold.

Upon a question requiring answers which could not possibly be drawn from any single experience, it is meet to subpoena a cloud of witnesses from the inner ranks of the initiated, with scattering evidence from the outer ranks of lookers-on, who may sometimes speak with quite as much frankness and authority.

In the longshoreman's testimony that "love is not what it is cracked up to be—it's only the name it's got," and in the olympically resigned admission of the Concord seer, that love is "deciduous," one catches the same note of disappointment which no amount of philosophy

can wholly soften—a note that has sent its minor wail through fiction and life since the beginning of love and letters. If we turn to the poet, he answers in mournful meter,

"Love swells like the Solway and ebbs like its tide."

If we appeal to the psychologist, he replies with the cold candor of a theorem that all emotion is subject to periodicity.

And yet, and yet, in the very disappointment which is universally felt in the discovery of the transiency of love, there is a hidden assurance that somewhere another kind of love exists, corresponding to a higher expectation in the heart of man,—a love described in "A Summer in Arcady," "a love that remains faithful when the one of the two sits warm in the sun and the other lies cold in the shadow; that burns on and on as a faithful, lonely flame in a worn-out broken

lamp, and that asks, as its utmost desire, for a life throughout eternity, spirit with spirit." Such an affection is again and again acknowledged by Shakespere:

"Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds."
"Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom."

Nor need one draw his conclusions on the subject exclusively from the fancies of a poet, even when that poet is Shakespere. For the mature man can rarely be found who has not, in the course of his travels, discovered in some wise or simple Darby and Joan—if not in himself—the living realization of the Shakespereean ideal. From the further consideration, however, of the ideal type of love this paper is debarred by its title, which restricts its investigations to a less ideal kind that does not bear it out to the edge of doom. But a few comforting concessions seemed called for, before the

reader was asked to wander in the thorny paths which lead away from the delectable lands of love into the cold, bleak regions of indifference and hate.

Though a hundred little roads lead to this much-discovered country, the broadest thoroughfares begin at the gates marked Familiarity, Wealth, Poverty, Selfishness, Duplicity, Naggishness, and False Pride.

On the subject of familiarity, the poet and the proverb-maker (may they perish who say our good things before us!) have forestalled our own Solomonizings by such harrowing couplets as,

> "When each the other shall avoid
> Shall each by each be most enjoyed,"

and

> "The toy so fiercely sought
> Hath lost its charm by being caught,"

which is only a free translation of *omne ignotum pro magnifico*, or no man is a hero to his valet. So long as there is a consid-

erable territory in the mind and soul of a man or a woman which can be marked "Unknown Regions," as the extreme polar spaces are charted on the maps, the dangers of familiarity will not be fatal. But alas for the day when all the unknown regions have been explored, and curiosity and interest have gone ashore with no further incentive to discovery! The charm of expectancy which interlines the first chapter of a new book may never be duplicated in a second reading. But lest this should sound disheartening, let one bear in mind that there are many men and women whose last chapter it takes a lifetime to reach. On the other hand, some men and women have very few readable chapters beyond their facial preface.

But coming to the end of the last chapter is only one of the dangers of the inevitable day-after-dayness of matrimony. A lady whose wisdom is the fruitage of

thirty happy years of married life testifies that a large percentage of matrimonial reverses grow out of a lack of reserve and courtesy, a verdict which is quaintly indorsed by Robert Burdette in one of his New Year's resolutions: "I will be as polite to my wife as though she were a perfect stranger." A recognition of the same lurking danger under discussion may be found in one of Lamb's letters: "But there is a monotony in the affections, which people living together are apt to give in to; a sort of indifference in the expression of kindness for each other, which demands that we should sometimes call to our aid the trickery of surprise."

There are still other causes in familiarity, lying outside the habits and characteristics of those who love each other, which help to wear threadbare the beautiful patterns which love has woven. A

sameness of material circumstance and background is as monotonous as a sameness or blankness of mind and soul.

My friend Mirva, who has a mathematical fancy, once computed the probable number of meals which Hiram and Mariah had eaten *vis-a-vis* during the fifty-two years of their wedded weal. The result, making random allowance for illness and casual absences, was fifty-four thousand, seven hundred and fifty. Mirva declares that no thougthful man or woman can face such appalling figures without flinching. "To think," continues that lady, "of having the prose of a menu thrust three times daily between two people who have been taught—by novelists—to think of love against the background of a vine-clad, moon-lit veranda, with dim music in the distance!"

Of course, Mirva was only airing her fancies; for she afterward confessed in

confidence that she happened to know just one man with whom she would dare risk taking fifty thousand meals *vis-a-vis*. Nearly every woman knows one such man. At the same time she suggested that married people would do well to go camping or picnicking occasionally to break up the table side of matrimonial monotony. Mirva also has a theory that married people should have an extremely varied wardrobe to diversify their personalities for each other's benefit; and lastly, that they should resolutely take vacations from each other whenever their golden chains begin to chafe. This argument Mirva reinforces by some interesting statistics. In the course of her travels she has been making a list of happy couples, young and old, that have come under her observation, and out of the forty thus collected, thirty are cases where the husband is absent all day long,

or for longer periods of days, weeks, or sometimes months.

By the unclouded light of such statistics, Emerson's warning that lovers should keep their strangeness, cannot be interpreted, even by the crassest reader, as the mere expression of anaemic aloofness, but rather as a wise protest which would stay the rash soul ready to barter the purple twilight of the gods for the garish certainties of mortal noonday. Matching with beautiful psychological nicety the warning given by Emerson, is the commentary of a woman whose emotional deeps continually irrigated the soil in which her genius flourished. "The explicitness of an engagement," wrote George Eliot, "wears off the finest edge of susceptibility; it is jasmine, gathered and presented in a large bouquet."

Even Thoreau, though his illumination was not produced by conjugal friction,

had used his eyes enough to be able to confirm the verdicts already rendered: "We meet at short intervals," he wrote, "not having had time to acquire any new value for each other." Finally, nature herself gives us an admonitory hint of the intermittent capacity of everything, when she lets a pearl lose its luster, if it is not submerged now and then in the revivifying ocean to recover its fading iridescence.

Yet the most willing obedience to all these hints will not avail in those cases where the poppy-like transiency of love is due to a fatal twist in the temperament of the lover or the loved. For some men and women are like children who exhaust, with abnormal rapidity, the possibilities of enjoyment in each new plaything that is given them. One child will play a few minutes with a beautiful toy, then tear it to pieces and throw it away,

evincing almost as little compunction as Henry VIII. felt in discarding his wives. Another child will play for years with a sorry-faced doll, exhibiting toward it the same tender constancy displayed by Dr. Johnson, when he continued to call his wife "pretty, dear creature," long past the time when the term was accurate, if it ever was.

The case of the fickle man or woman is of all most hopeless, since neither ever learns, apparently, that what has happened twice, thrice, or a dozen times, will, in all human probability, happen again. So love, to the inconstant, is always a will-o'-the-wisp, which lures its victims into bogs and swamps.

"Ah! if my wife were only like Miss Fata Morgana," sighs Sir Fickle, not knowing that should Miss Fata Morgana become Lady Fickle, he would in still briefer time than before be sighing, "Ah!

if my wife were only like Miss or Mrs. Mirage!"

It must be confessed, however, that even the most constant men and women cannot escape a perplexing amount of elusiveness in the moods which they would fain entice to permanency. To this tune sings Lowell, in "The Cathedral," "For me, once felt is so felt nevermore." Emerson, too, who might have been expected to shed a steady, incandescent light upon the objects of his regard, confesses that when one has once seen a picture he must take leave of it, for he will never see it again.

The causes underlying these experiences have been elaborated by Professor James, in his own beguiling style: "Our sensations," he writes, "following the mutations of our capacity for feeling, are always undergoing an essential change. . . . For an identical sensation to recur, it

would have to occur the second time in an unmodified brain. But as this, strictly speaking, is a physiological impossibility, so is an unmodified feeling an impossibility; for to every brain modification, however small, must correspond a change of equal amount in the feeling which the brain subserves.

"All this would be true if even sensations came to us pure and simple, and not combined into 'things.' Even then we should have to confess that, however we might in ordinary conversation speak of getting the same sensation again, we never in strict theoretic accuracy could do so, and that whatever was true of the river of life, of the river of elementary feeling, it would certainly be true to say, like Heraclitus, that we never descend twice into the same stream." . . .

Often we are ourselves struck at the strange differences in our successive views

of the same thing." . . . "From one year to another we see things in new lights. What was unreal has grown real, and what was exciting is insipid. The friends we used to care the world for are shrunken to shadows." . . . "The young girls that brought an aura of infinity, at present hardly distinguishable existences." . . . "Experience is remolding us every moment, and our mental reaction on every given thing is really a resultant of our experience of the whole world up to that date."

Since it is then obvious that poor harried mortals must have a "mental reaction," nilly-willy, on every given thing with which they come in contact, there is very evident propriety in limiting the considerations of this paper to just a few of the reasons why love grows cold. To those reasons we again turn, pausing at the second gate of peril marked Wealth.

Here we shall need but the simplest roadside logic to convince us that a needlessly large income is a menace to love. For the question is not, how hardly shall they that are rich enter into the kingdom of Cupid, but how hardly shall they remain in, when once they have entered. For their overabundance of leisure too often delivers them over to a surfeit of acquaintance from which the workingman is saved.

Moreover, the traditional employer of idle hands attends to the rich man's case, and is ready to show him where the primrose paths of dalliance lie.

On the other hand, poverty as an amorous damper is even more effectual than riches, since no plant can long thrive in a hard, unsunned, and unwatered soil. A certain amount of leisure and freedom from anxiety is indispensable to the bare existence, not to say growth, of love.

For how can minds, continually pre-empted by sordid visions of bills for rent, coal, and groceries, find room for the entertainment of gentler emotions? Time is as necessary to love well as to do anything else well. In this connection, observe the sanity of Agur's supplication, "Give me neither poverty nor riches."

Yet even when love is nested in the *juste milieu* between poverty and riches, it may be far from the *juste milieu* of temperament. With the most perfect lubrication of the material axes of love, what magic oil can still the creakings that are caused by a nagging disposition, or the friction generated by a conflict between sordid ideals and high ones?

If memory, or the law of association, were less inexorable in its workings, the consequences which follow nagging would be less fatal to love. But the thing received, be it pleasant or unpleasant, is

so unavoidably associated with the person who gives it, that height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can prevent the identification of the pain or the pleasure with its cause. Nor is this pain always the result of aggressive unkindness. Negative qualities, as everybody knows, are frequently as galling as positive ones. Plutarch tells of a man who divorced, without apparent cause, a wife both beautiful and virtuous; but when he was plied for a reason, he answered by raising his foot, and asking if any one could tell where the shoe pinched.

Something of the same purport may be found in an essay which is not less profound because there are ripples on its surface, by Max O'Rell, who declares that "love is a fragile flower that is revived by a mere sigh, shattered by a mere breath," . . . "feeds on trifles, and lives on illusions."

When it is remembered that the trifles upon which love feeds are never the same in any two cases of *amat* and *amatur*, the original complexity of the problem of keeping love alive becomes desperately manifest. The lover's sensitiveness and delicacy of perception, which delight the heart of the woman who loves him, may also torture her with the disillusions of their discoveries. For love is less blind than the traditions which make him so, seeing, rather, with the anointed eye which discerns the difference which a difference makes. Be it only an accent, a gesture, or a ribbon too much, and straightway he droops, like the mimosa genus to which he belongs. In a recent work of fiction the decline of the hero's love begins with the discovery that the *chaussure* of his beautiful sweetheart is not always irreproachable. Musing in the key of *ex pede*, he develops a theory which is later sub-

stantiated by the remembrance of a not impeccable lace tie, and the sequel is estrangement. The Diary of Judge Sewell records a kindred case of disenchantment, following the lover's vision of his betrothed, deposed by an apron that bore state's evidence against its wearer.

Not less sensitive is love to a lack of freshness in the apparel of the thoughts and feelings. Words and phrases—as well as aprons—may be worn too long, and as the more intimate raiment of the soul itself are more indicative of the man than the apparel which oft proclaims him. On this point Rostand has given the world some very much needed illumination in his "Cyrano de Bergerac," making it forever clear to those who can follow him, that a man's feelings rarely outstrip his thinkings and their verbal expression. In a word, that a man's emotional gamut is fairly well indexed by his

thought and his ability to express that thought.

This fact is admirably brought out in the characters of Cyrano and Christian. The greater intellectual and emotional range of the former exhibits itself in language befitting its greatness. Christian, having only an octave of thoughts and feelings, must, perforce, play so monotonously that Roxane wearies of him and his shallow harmonies, which would have satisfied the soul of a more shallow woman.

But while Christian has hardly originality and initiative enough to compose a kiss—with every stimulus to aid him—Cyrano can give a verbal definition of one, which is more responsible for the responsiveness of Roxane's lips than the real kiss left upon them by Christian.

Aurora Elberta, another heroine less famous than Roxane, confessed to her

diary that the first symptom of a diminuendo in her love came with the slight chafing produced by her lover's invariable habit of beginning his letters with "My darling," and ending them no less changelessly with the words "Fondly ever."

"After the first forty letters," Aurora explained, "I felt like suggesting that Robert should use a printing stamp for the beginning and ending of his letters; but I refrained, remembering his sensitiveness, and tried to cajole myself into the belief that such constancy of expression must argue constancy of affection, despite the baser suggestion of an imp of fancy that verbal constancy might argue instead a dangerous mental inertia."

If clouds like these can chase the bow-god's smile, what length of countenance may he be expected to wear, when he is see-sawed by the alien ideals of those who

are unequally yoked? Hymen, expert engineer as he is, cannot build a bridge long enough to span the gulf between the Mr. and Mrs. Lydgates that may be found in every large community. One would fain believe that such unequal yokings are of rare occurrence, and accept without dissent the poetical philosophy:

> "Silver to silver creep and wind,
> And kind to kind.
> Nor less the eternal poles
> Of tendency distribute souls."

But, alas! good poet, how many souls are distributed by the eternal poles of tendency, and how many by the reckless toss and pitch of that capricious Jabberwock, Propinquity? Beyond a peradventure, there are cases like yours and mine, my discriminating reader, where the soul's invisible antennae are so sensitive that they can detect the deep and subtle difference between the eternal poles of tend-

ency and the transitory propulsions of propinquity. The average man, however, especially in the callow days of youth, is usually entirely lacking in the power to discriminate between an eternal tendency and a temporal penchant. Such a power of divination may be latent in many who do not give themselves time to let it develop. Hence the endless line of matrimonial burlesques, comedies, and tragedies, which are daily enacted in the woes of the wedded. What candid reader of life or newspapers would maintain that an eternal tendency presided over the choice of the soulful Professor Myope, who hitched his star to a wagon, when he mated, or the quicksand attachment between the radiant Lady Silvia and a moral troglodyte?

In all such cases one does not need to ask why love grows cold, for the answer is written upon the face of the con-

ditions. Again, who could look for a basis of permanency in an affection built upon ideals like these, taken from life: "The girl I marry must have small feet," and "I won't marry any man who isn't rich and handsome."

Not only is there danger in the cheap ideals which lovers cherish of each other, but also in their notions of post-connubial happiness. On their own confession, many married people expect and hope to feel an undeviating temperature in their affections, when the probability is that it is neither possible not desirable that love should constantly register the same degree Amorheit. One would weary of a physical atmosphere always at the same mark. Why not also of a psychical one? Hence the unwisdom of alarm, when an occasional difference causes a mist in Cupid's barometer.

For a genuine case of love in decline

a plain old-fashioned Christian prescription of Golden Rule has been known to suffice. But there are cases where the disease is more insidious and love is mysteriously veered from its pivotage, much as the needle of a compass is deflected by unseen ground-currents. Hardly less inscrutable are some of the agencies that have served to resuscitate a love apparently long deceased. A kind of affection, which might be called dog-in-the-manger-love, is peculiarly susceptible to this kind of awakening. Let us suppose that Mr. Philistine Smug perceives that there are two young men who would like to win the hand of Miss Double Entry, to whom he is making his suit. Being a man without much originality of perception or appreciation, he is quite as much influenced by the admiration of his rivals as by the intrinsic attractions of Miss Double Entry. But let him win the lady in question,

and let the other suitors go on their way surviving.

Gradually Mr. Smug's affection, which never had any very adequate *raison d'etre*, lapses into a very torpid condition. But the wheels of chance again bring one of the rejected suitors into the Smug neighborhood, and another chance allows Mr. Smug to witness an accidental encounter between Lady Smug and her whilom admirer. A very slight incident, but not so in its result. Mrs. Smug is suddenly overwhelmed with lavishments of tenderness from her husband. If she does not inquire too closely into the genesis of this tender awakening, Mrs. Smug may find pleasure in it; but if she is one who looks for causes (which could hardly be expected in a woman who had married Mr. Smug), one cannot envy her her musings.

It may seem almost like profanity to designate as love the bond of union be-

tween two people of the Smug genus. But the study of the rise and fall of even a Smug emotion is not without interest and significance to the student of causes. For there are also fluctuations and changes in the affections of those who are many removes from the Smug plane of susceptibility.

On a higher plane of emotion it often happens that what is mistaken for a decline in love is, in reality, only its passing into a state of self-unconsciousness. When a child begins to walk, he is gleefully conscious of every step; but later, his walking becomes wholly automatic. In like manner when two people first love each other they may feel in the fact an exuberant consciousness, which by degrees passes away, and in its passing they imagine that love, too, is gone, and can scarcely be convinced of their error, save by the testimony of an absence, or a severe

illness, or some other circumstance which reveals the true condition of their hearts.

So the man who is secretly sighing over the apparent passing of love would do well to put his feeling to the test by absence, if no other method offers, before writing *hic jacet* over the empty grave of love. In several cases out of many there will be a discovery which will rhyme very well with the sequel to the Ocean's quarrel with the Land:

"I'm done with thee," said the Ocean.

"As it please thee, my lord," replied the Land; "try rolling awhile without me."

So the Ocean leaped, roared, tossed, and stormed, in a mighty effort to break away from the Earth, till at last he gently sank back to her arms, penitently sighing, as he caressed her:

"Thou art more of myself than I, my love."

"And less am I of myself than thou," answered the whispering Earth.

"Dost know the hidden bond that holds us thus together?" murmured the Ocean.

"The Little Mortals call it love," she said.

THE DIFFERENCE 'TWIXT WORD AND WORD.

It is one of Mr. Howells's characters, I believe, who says that there is very little difference between any two people, but what little difference there is, is very important. The same principle has a still closer application in the realm of rhetoric. There may be very little difference between two synonymous words, but what little difference there is, is very important, for in it lies all that from a literary point of view is known as style, or, from a social point of view, as tact. For the latter quality is seldom possible without a nice ear for the delicate distinctions of implication that exist in the marvelously graded scale of adjectives that have come into most languages in

response to the subtle needs of sensitive people.

To cite a common instance, "fat" and "lean," with options in "skinny" and "bony," may have answered the purpose very well in the guileless beginnings of a language, when a crude race used it; and even now, in the rural fastnesses of the earth, where golden-rod is known as "yellow-top," one may find many people whose vocabulary is innocent of any but very primitive distinctions. But even as the modern loom has given us a countless variety of fabrics, from the heaviest frieze to the most filmy muslin and silk, in place of the rough homespun of other days, so the adjectives and descriptive phrases of a perverse and cultivated generation show a more delicate and varied mental weave, reflecting the finer requirements of finer usage.

Instead of "fat" or "lean," verbal so-

phistication softens unpleasant verities by such variations as, "well-conditioned," "plump," "stout," "stocky," "portly," "thick-set," "full-figured," "massive," "*embonpoint*," or, in an unavoidable extremity, "corpulent" and "rotund," while, shading away from "lean" or "skinny," it has "thin," "spare," "slight," "slender," "shadowy," "frail," "fragile,' or "emaciated."

Among such adjectives the tactful man instinctively feels his way, and rarely says "glutton" for "*bon-vivant*," "thin as a rail" when "slender" would have answered his purpose, or "fat" when "plump" or "*embonpoint*" would have veiled his meaning without hiding its import.

So copious and adjustable in its verbal niceties has language become that a single remark containing an adjective or a descriptive phrase will often give the key to a man's mind and character. When a

woman's descriptive vocabulary is exhausted by "nice" or "very pretty," with antonyms in "nasty" and "horrid," one is furnished with a fairly accurate chart of her mental and moral boundaries. Especially significant in their revelation of character are the adjectives which a woman applies to another woman, or those which a man uses in speaking of another man. A feminine nose, to which a man refers as "*slightly retroussé*," is a "turnup" when a certain kind of unkind woman mentions it. This same kind of woman speaks of full or protruding eyes, as "bulgy," or "fishy," and the lithe or willowy maid she dubs "loose-jointed."

How much, too, is revealed by one's allusions to those who have come "within range of the rifle-pits." An "old fogy" and an "elderly gentleman" may sometimes mean about the same, but one can

imagine that it would be far more pleasant to live with the man or woman who used the latter expression.

One of the most familiar illustrations of the delicately evasive possibilities of language is found in the last chapter of Ecclesiastes.

Many other passages in the Bible and the classics show how, in all ages, language has recorded the instinctive recoil from the bald harsh statement of unpleasant or unpalatable truths, seeking "by indirections to find directions out." In connivance with this motive are all the classic and Scriptural equivalents for death and dying. When the messenger reports Absalom's condition to David, he does not say that he is dead, but uses that most tactful circumlocution, "The enemies of my lord the King, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is."

The use of sleep for the slumber which Jeremiah calls "perpetual sleep" is also common in almost all languages. Not only for death, but for many other conditions, language is disposed to coin soft and alleviating terms. To the toper's nearest of kin, words like "intoxicated" and "inebriated" are a trifle less brutal than the shorter monosyllable which records that state of unbeing. In response to similar needs of the sensitive people who have acquired wealth too rapidly, language supplies all those muffled equivalents for theft and robbery, like "accumulation," "conveyance," "defalcation," "appropriation," and "embezzlement."

So the semi-pet names, "Deil," "Clootie" and "Nickie-ben," carry with them suggestions of easy-going tolerance and a tacit acknowledgment of humanity's naughty camaraderie with the Prince of Darkness, a camaraderie that would e'en find re-

deeming traits and a ground for a larger hope in a crony of so dark a color. Altogether different is the stern effect of the uncompromising names, Devil and Satan—words devoid of any suggestion of moral coquetry or concession.

Of kindred interest, in connection with the study of the verbal make-weights of language, are all the words that mark the gradual transition of a virtue into a vice. The same praiseworthy quality that starts out as "thrift," if increased ever so slightly, becomes "frugality," and then by still more unseemly increments passes into parsimoniousness, close-fistedness, stinginess, and downright miserliness. In this instance, as in almost every other, there seems to be a redundancy of epithets applicable to a virtue in its sag-end estate compared with those that describe it in its pristine condition.

But whether one is to infer from this

that there are more illustrations of vices than of virtues, or that the indignation of virtuous onlookers finds vent in coining terms of opprobrium, deponent doth not say. Another case in point is furnished by the long list of labels applied to the insane, while one or two serve to designate the sane. Besides demented, unhinged, unbalanced, crazy, raving and *non compos mentis*, there is a long series known to slanguage, such as "wheels," "nutty," "batty," "cracked,' "addlepated," "a screw loose," "not all there," "no wick in his lamp," "bats in his belfry," "wool in his thinker," and "bubbles in his think-tank."

Not a little of the art of administering the soft answer, enjoined by Scripture, depends upon one's ear for detecting the feather-fine distinctions that lurk under the more obvious meaning of words. Such a genius presides over all those neatly

evasive phrases which abounds in the French language. Sleeping *a la belle etoile* sounds so much less like a rigorous extremity than if otherwise stated; while "giving one the key of the fields" is a far daintier form of dismissal than sending one "about his business."

Belle mere is another innocent subterfuge of this tender tongued race—a word doubtless built upon the same propitiating principle of derivation which inspired the *Eumeuides*. Another instance of the same racial delicacy of diction was furnished by the reply of a pallid Frenchman on his first sea-voyage:

"Have you breakfasted?" inquired a fellow-passenger.

"On the contrary," was the faint response.

Even in the baldly prosaic walks of life the potency of the little less and the little more is recognized. A New York business

firm, advertising for an office-manager, once made use of the diplomatic circumocution, "Wanted a widow *or other.*" Again, the shopkeeper, when he marks his goods, is keenly aware of the fictitious magnitude which the difference between ninety-nine cents and one dollar assumes to the ear of the average shopper. The physician, in like manner, when he makes out his prescription in abbreviated Latin, or darkly mysterious chemical symbols, gives himself the wink whenever he happens to think how much of its therapeutic value would be lost were it translated into the noonday candor of common speech. And eke the lawyer, the political orator, and clergyman will admit that the winning of a case, an election, or a soul may depend upon the effective tournure of a phrase, the discriminating choice of a single word, or the dove-like intonation of its delivery.

But it is the poets most of all who profit by a knowledge of the little less and the little more that are such worlds away. Let one attempt to change but one word in the sublimely pitched and stately measured cadences of the ninetieth and ninety-first psalms, and what rhetorical discord would ensue! There are many other words that may be used for dwelling-place, when one speaks of the human habitations of man. But here dwelling-place is the word inevitable, the only one that satisfies the ear of sense and soul, with its suggestion of breadth without boundaries in space or time.

Still closer to absolute perfection of diction is the magnificent sweep of the words, "From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God."

One feels a pulse of sympathy for the clergyman who prefaces his own remarks with the reading of either of these two

marvelous psalms. The unavoidable anti-climax that results in almost every case may well account for the custom of building a long bridge of hymns and prayer to carry the audience safely over the fearful chasm and steep declivity that lie between these psalms and the average sermon of the average clergyman.

A similar sensation is felt when one passes from the rhetorical peaks of Shakespere to the literary lowlands of light modern fiction. To avoid the mental jolt of such a transition, one needs to construct a carefully cogged train of authors by which he may compass the descent with safety. The passage likewise, from one language or dialect to another, as any reader of the smoothest translation knows, is a continual series of rhetorical "thank-you ma'ams," that rack the mental joints of memory and association, even when the languages are as closely

allied as the English and Scotch. What singer would dare to swindle an audience with an English rendering of "Annie Laurie," "Bonnie Doon," "Bide Awee," or any of the wistful Scotch lays that lilt their way into the ear like the lave-rock's morning song?

And where were half the humor and pathos of the tales of Jamie Soutar, Drumsheugh, and Weelum Maclure, without the depth, strength, and tenderness which inhere in their sturdy speech?

When a man of such stalwart principles as Burnbrae says, "dinna greet," to his gude wife, one feels a double tenderness in the word for which there is no English equivalent. It is, indeed, along the line of tender, caressing syllables that the English language is most deficient. By ever so slight vowel variations, the Scotch may wand into existence a poetical vocabulary whose manifest destiny is the chronicling

of fond sighs and life-long heartaches. Compare the random parallel vocabularies here given and it would not be difficult to believe that even a Scotch dictionary might move to tears a susceptible and imaginative reader:

dee	die
slippit awa' . .	passed away
bairnies . . .	children
lassie . . .	girl
laddie . . .	boy
dinna . . .	don't
canna . . .	can't
mither . . .	mother
auld	old
sae	so
sair	sore

The German language, also, is especially rich in all those haunting words that echo so accurately the general alas-ness and nevermore-ness, which checker life and characterize the poetical outbreaks

of lovers. How brief and consolable seems the woe recorded in the English words, lost, gone, or even vanished, compared with the three-syllabled reverberations of dolor that die away in such words as *vergangen*, *verloren*, *verschwunden*, and *nimmermehr*.

Of course, the real poet will find poetic words in any language, or coin them himself—words which the proser can never discover. Amos Jiggins and Edgar Allan Poe may use the same dictionary, but the singing words will never find their way to the pen of Mr. Jiggins. Like the sunflower and violet, that draw their different textures and coloring from the same soil, every mind, by equally subtle processes of affinity, draws from the mother-language the material for its own peculiar verbal efflorescence.

When all other pages have been thumbed, rhetoricians will find no text-book so full

of hints on the little less and more as the wonder-volumes edited by Nature. Study her green or amber pages, as she begins to tell you a story in the quiet prose of a field of grass or barley. Will she let the tale grow tedious by an unvaried repetition of grassy commonplaces?

Not she. After she has calmed you with a few still paragraphs, she wafts a gentle breeze over the fields, and ripples her prose into green and golden waves of poetry, or anon sends a cheerful bird, bumblebee, or butterfly to annotate her chapters. By what slight changes and variations, too—of a feather less or more —does she pass through myriad forms from a most grotesque dodo to the dainty bird-of-paradise!

Looking beyond the first-hand works of Nature, there is also abundant evidence of her tutorship in the name by which man distinguishes her creations. Was

there not, from the very soul of a beautiful bird or blossom, a mysterious emanation that first suggested to man a name consonant with its beauty? The more obvious instances of this onomatopoeia even a child may detect; but the same influence, by a more esoteric process, has also determined the names of objects whose qualities are more complex and elusive. Witness: laurel, linden, lilac, and willow—names which contain syllabic hints of the grace and beauty of the trees they designate.

So daffodil, lily, and daisy, clover, myrtle, and edelweiss as surely were christened at Nature's suggestion by some one whose ear was fine enough to catch—and whose mind was fine enough to duplicate verbally—the inaudible echoes which these blossoms made in his own soul. Not less aptly do the words cabbage, pumpkin, potato, and turnip measure the cruder

qualities resident in those homely vegetables; while celery and asparagus as plainly mark a transition to a less stolid plane of vegetation.

What a world of material, too, for studies in verbal psychology might be culled from the names which authors have coined or appropriated for their characters. Ariel and Caliban cannot change names, neither can Hamlet and Jack Falstaff. Equally impossible would it be to think of Miranda, Cordelia, Imogene, or Ophelia bearing the name of Goneril. Not less fine-eared than Shakespere, in her genius for christening according to character, was George Eliot. When the arrival of Aunt Glegg and Aunt Pullet is announced, are we not already prepared for the worst, even as Hetty Sorrel's name forewarns us of petulant pettiness and Adam Bede's of physical and moral strength? How perfectly, too, does the harsh and austere

resonance of Casaubon fit the man whose family quarterings were "three cuttle-fish sable, and a commentator ramp-ant."

If we compare the every-day words that are being coined now—the dry-jointed ones of science, or the flippant ones of slan-guage—with those of ancient and assured position, lexicographically, we shall be forced to admit that it was most fortunate that the naming of things did not devolve upon a generation whose ears have been dulled by the brazen gongs of materialism. Undoubtedly, there are a few men and women now living who might rechristen the contents of the universe with many apt and poetic effects. Yet, notwithstand-ing our optimistic faith in these fine-eared few, were we threatened with the total obliteration of all the names now preserved in memory or print, most of us would grasp our dictionaries with an

access of fervor that would send a new thrill through their old, unhonored covers.

If, for inordinate sins of acquisitiveness, we should be divested some day of our wisdom, and bereft of any language, there might still be a hope that we could regain our lost paradises, if by chance there should be any Indian or savage tribes then extant. These, living closer to Nature, have always caught with finer ear "the rhymes of the universe," and the effete nations of the earth might safely delegate to them the naming of everything. A copy of any geographical dictionary of our continent would be all the certificate of competence which any Indian would need to elect him to the office of second Adam to an unnamed creation. Contrast, in the columns here given, the Indian's poetic delicacy of interpretation with the sordid renderings given by the

shrewd successors who despoiled him of his estates:

Minnehaha	Joggins' Mines
Wilawana	Gull Cove
Owatana	Bogart
Winnebago	Dudswell Center
Minnedosa	Tupperville
Kinistino	Digby
Winona	Flesherton Station
Susquehanna	Stubbs' Bay
Massawippi	Scott's Junction
Témiscouata	Hants
Juanita	Jimps

Very interesting resemblances to the poetry of Indian names are found in the words and figures of young children who have not yet felt the weight of custom lie heavy upon them. "The starlight is the little sister of the moonlight, isn't it?" was the poetic query of a boy of five. The same child, seeing for the first time a field of white daisies, exclaimed, "Oh!

papa, the daisies are the cream of the grass, aren't they?"

In nearly all children this instinct for finding apt and poetic imagery for things seen and felt is keener and finer than in the average adult, who gradually falls into the habit of using only the well-worn words and expressions employed by those whose fancy-windows have been boarded up by the stern matter-of-factness of life.

Happily for literature, there are those in whom wonder keeps alive the natural instinct for using fresh imagery. In the poet, pre-eminently, and in many unknown to the world as such, the gift and power of the child's fresh vision remain, and wax instead of waning with maturity. When Pericles said the year had "lost its Spring," speaking of certain young men who had fallen in battle, he apprehended a sadly old occurrence with the fresh perceptions of a poet.

In all such seeing and recording, the idea and its form of expression are as organically knit together as the tissue of a maple leaf or a pansy petal. Take away the form and color of the leaf, or of the idea, and either is destroyed. And is this not one of the closest tests of poetry and the genius back of it? For in every poetic thought the idea is so appareled that it is impossible to clothe it in any other form without destroying the idea itself. It is more accurate to speak of such thoughts as being embodied, as the lily is an embodiment of a beautiful thought, than to speak of their form as a thing apart from themselves.

On the other hand, the raiment of the prose idea has no such vital connection with its wearer. As a rule, there is an indefinite number of rhetorical vestments, all well worn, that are equally becoming or unbecoming to its bony self. But let

some reader try any other drapery than the one it wears on this fancy of Mrs. Wharton's: "Her graces were complementary, and it needed the mate's call to reveal the flash of color beneath her neutral-tinted wings." Again, who would venture to give a new verbal incarnation to either of these ideas: "Man, thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear," or

"By the blue rushing of the arrowy Rhone"?

When we come upon thoughts so fitly embodied as these, wonder cannot help asking if there is not some fine, invisible force, like that which draws steel filings to a magnet, which draws to the poetic mind the apt word or figure which fits its fancy? How else, in a universe brimming with suggestions for millions and millions of figures, does a groping thought discover its proper verbal incarnation?

For those who take part in the still creations of the thought-world, there will

always be a mysterious fascination in the endless rhetorical possibilities that wait hundreds and thousands of years for the new-born idea to which they belong. Among these possibilities, hidden in the invisible regions of the universe, the thinker will go on mining, forever, for the treasures whose very intangibility makes them allure.

NATURE'S GAMES OF HIDE-AND-SEEK.

The Trappist monk who takes the vow of silence is a true disciple of Nature, whose object-lessons are given in the silent academy of the green world and the starry chapels of the sky.

Coming into this noiseless academy of Nature, man finds challenging him a million problems marvelously dovetailed to fit his mental capacities—problems involving millions of questions. But behind them all sits Nature, a warning finger ever on her lips, to remind man of her vow of silence.

On the simpler schedule of her required course, man finds such life-problems as, "How will you keep from freezing and starving?" But though her poor human

children shiver and starve while trying to answer her conundrums, Nature is unmoved and will furnish no Bohn for her difficult passages. In her later elective courses, involving the problems of the sciences and arts, Nature is even less communicative, making generation after generation work on the same old problems, incidentally illustrating her own profundity and inculcating the virtues of patience and persistence. Indeed, if the Sphinx-like Mistress of the Great Open should break her vow of silence, one might expect her to whisper, "Festina lente, little folk; millions of years have been spent in packing the heavens and earth with problems for man. Do you think we shall let you guess them all in a day, or a few short centuries? Though the edict has gone forth that everything shall be put under your feet, the date of the fulfillment of that prophecy is aeons off. Meantime,

the game of hide-and-seek goes merrily on, and is very entertaining to the Umpire.

"You humans get so very 'warm' sometimes, as your children say in their lesser games of hide-and-seek. You have your fingers almost on a prodigious secret, and then, for some unaccountable reason, you get cold again and fail to find it. It is this element of unaccountability in your finite moves that makes the game of hide-and-seek between myself and man so entertaining. Several of your so-called scientists and inventors have been very 'warm' in their search for the secret of aerial navigation, whose principles have been given in the object-lessons furnished by flying birds. And several Arctic explorers have been very 'warm'—though not warm enough to keep them from freezing—in their game of Polar hide-and-seek.

"It is exceedingly interesting to me," one fancies Lady Nature continuing, "to see how many generations can behold an open secret without perceiving its significance. Think of the thousands before Watts, who had seen a tea-kettle dance with steam for a partner, who never caught a hint of the mighty secret that was jauntily flaunting itself in their faces.

"There have been other occasions when I have feared that you mortals would discover, prematurely, secrets which belonged to a generation of riper wisdom and understanding. The discovery of gunpowder and dynamite would have been prevented till all men were peacefully inclined, if I could have had my way. But I cannot let mankind have his way and have my own at the same time, so it sometimes happens that man outwits me, though he is always obliged to pay the fiddler in the end."

Why Love Grows Cold

It is, perchance, presumptuous to put words in the mouth of *La belle Dame Silencieuse.* Nevertheless, it is natural to wonder if she has any exact rules in her cosmic game of hide-and-seek. Does she "time" the players in her game, allowing a score of years for the discovery of one secret and double that number for another? In other words, has she fixed dates for disclosing her secrets, and picked players to whom she occultly signals, "You are 'warm,' stop there"; or, does she allow a certain amount of fortuity of time and personality to enter into the conditions of the game? Does she deliberately give such a mental and soular twist to one man's thinking that he is instinctively and irresistibly lured by the sublime game of hide-and-seek among the stars, which ends in astronomical discoveries, and does she in another man invert this twist, so that he must, perforce,

go digging in the earth, finding his game of hide-and-seek in dark subterranean regions, where the shorthand records of prehistoric races are hidden away?

On the face of Nature, herself, one may read no sign as she stolidly umpires the games of the universe. But who can doubt that, back of her seeming indifference, there was for the Maker of the Great Playground a delight in hiding for man treasures in the innermost parts of the earth, the ocean deeps, and inaccessible realms of upper air; a delight not unrelated to the happiness which human parents feel when they hide their Christmas presents in the very toes of their children's stockings, or delay the discovery of their choicest gifts by folds upon folds of wrapping-paper. Nor is it merely fanciful to surmise that the jubilations of the grown-up children, who discover the larger gifts in the hiding-places of earth, sea, and

air, are a source of pleasure to the Giver who hid for their finding.

For what other ends, too, save to delight the eyes of the grown-up children of men, were fitted up and stored away with such mysterious cunning the weird caves and grottoes in the wild fastnesses of the earth, where for long centuries they were being decorated with stalactites, strange-colored lakes and rivers, like the enchanted lands of fairy-tales?

To each generation it is given to discover a few of the things that Nature has hidden in her great playground; but there are millions of other surprises which are kept for generations yet to be—finer secrets for finer senses. The grandparents learn to sail the ocean, but for the great-great-great-grandchildren is set the harder problem and greater glory of cloudward flight in the bird-winged spaces of the sky.

"See if you can find it, and what will you do with it when you have found it?" are the two great lures of Nature's game.

"Find my coal-beds, my oil-wells, my copper, gold, and silver veins, my marble and granite beds; the goodly grains of oak and ash trees; my diamonds, opals, and rubies.

"Now that you have found it, my little children, what will you do with that hard shining stuff which you call coal? Will you cook it or build walls with it? Aha! I see; you think you will try to burn it. I'll own you are getting warm, or will be soon; still, you are not yet 'out of the woods,' as you say. Touch a match to it; it does not ignite so readily as you could wish. Never mind, keep on trying. I see you will. There! you have caught the idea at last. Bright little creatures, these men!

"Found my marbles and granite, too?

Well, what will you do with them? Before you hack them up too much, only notice the fine colors and veinings in these stones. 'Twould be a pity to put them where their beauty would not be seen and admired. Ah! I feel your mind groping toward temple and cathedral designs. 'If it were only more regular in shape,' I hear you say. Fie! you can easily overcome that difficulty, my fine boys. But look! there is one among you who sees other things in this marble of mine. You call him a dreamy man, but by and by you will call him a genius and a sculptor, for he will make his dreams come true in marble; and the beautiful forms which he carves will delight the Creator of the marble, as they delight the sculptor and his fellow-men who see them.

"Still another man, standing near your quarries, has found a strangely different

use for these massive stones. He thinks the dead will be honored and the living gratified by rearing what you will call monuments and headstones over those who sleep under my green coverlids. Other spectators are doubtful about this, and, turning to me, cry: 'Tell me, Mother Nature, were monuments and headstones also predestined ideas, wrapped in the marble and granite, or are they but human vagaries?

"'Tell us, also,' exclaim other wondering ones, 'whether the beautiful grains of oak and sycamore were wrought for the ends to which man puts them, or are they simply the more happy forms of *lusus naturæ?*'

"'Confide, also, to me,' whispers the dreaming lover, as he slips a jeweled ring upon a finger of his sweetheart's hand, 'whether my use of the diamond and opal was foreseen when the still years wrought

rainbow tints—in the dark elements of the earth.'"

And yet no audible answer comes from *La Bella Donna Natura.* Still she goes on playing her game of hide-and-seek, not only with gold, silver, precious stones, pearls, corals, sea-ferns, buried footprints, fossils, and stars, but with the most common gifts of every-day life, down to the last morsel which man eats or the homeliest button on his coat. Between the field of waving wheat and the slice of bread which he eats she ranges door after door, double-bolted and barred, and sets him a score of riddles between the coquetting blossoms of the cotton plant and the dainty-patterned muslin into which they transmigrate.

How slight, too, is the cue which she gives in colorless sap of the sweet and solid commodity known to the world as maple sugar. In other instances she not

only gives no cue, but incases her gift in such a forbidding exterior that her confidence in man's ability to discover its proper use is one of the subtlest compliments paid to the human race. The oyster, in or out of its shell, the clam, and the unprepossessing lobster are examples in point. Even the common yellow pumpkin was once a noncommittal sphinx, bearing on its amiable, shiny jowls no hint of the latent pies which it contained. Sitting *vis-a-vis* to this popular pie, whose *raison-d'etre* seems so universally established, one must still harbor a vestige of wonder whether it was the final evolution foreordained for the pumpkin, or whether the pie idea was *de adventitia* and as wholly foreign to its original design and purpose as the burlesque, Jack O'Lantern destiny thrust upon it by the small boy.

Similar queries emerge from the blue

wreaths of smoke which halo the heads of the devotees of Lady Nicotine. The devotees themselves would answer with one accord that the obvious censer for the easeful weed was the golden bowl of the Meerschaum, or its baser clay substitute among the common brotherhood of pipes. And yet, despite the clouds of secular incense daily and hourly ascending from the pipes of men, there are those who are agnostic on this point, as they are concerning the mysterious evolutions over which a modern chef presides.

For the beasts of the field no such queries are possible. When the horse eats grass or oats, there is no loop-hole through which fancy may peep to spy a doubt whether the horse's use of grass is in accordance with its original purpose, and the same is true of everything on the menu of wild beasts. "Even when man is one of the items?" interposes the Grizzly.

Ah! Monsieur Bruin, you simply furnish another illustration of the main contention of this paper, that everything in this world has an unanswered riddle attached. Your own skin is a case in point. Was it designed solely and expressly to keep you warm, or was there a prevision of a secondary end which took account of man's needs also? Were the seal, otter, mink, and sable made warm and beautiful for those animals alone, or were the shivers of men and women, as well as their esthetic desires, considered, when the ill-visaged seal was robed in a fur that the haughtiest lady of the land is proud to wear? Moreover, if man lawfully holds a mortgage on the skins of all fur-bearing animals, and upon some of the feathers of birddom, what are the rules which decide the legal date of foreclosure?

Though these queries may belong to serious moral problems, Nature tran-

quilly includes them all in her guessing games. Kindred riddles lie in the method —which in man would seem criminal—by which Nature allows man to find out for himself, perhaps at the cost of many lives, the difference between her edible and poisonous plants. How naughty, too, looks her nonchalance which permits the human race to suffer for centuries from a thousand diseases when she has thousands of storehouses full of healing herbs and mineral waters! But the rules of her guessing game are dearer to Nature than aught else. "True," she says, "I have innumerable herbs and minerals for your innumerable diseases; but which herb and which mineral is good for each disease is for you to discover. The discovery may be attended with a few fatalities, but, after all, does it not provide you with a magnificent series of pretty problems in what you call the 'calcu-

lation of chances'? For even when you have hit upon the right remedy for some particular disease, there is still a large field for experiment in determining the proper amount for a dose; a small one may cure and a large one may kill you. But do not all these risks and chances add relish and zest to your search? The game's the thing. Bless your hearts," concludes that amiable dame, "only consider the pains I take to invent games for you. Have I not even gone so far as to bury whole cities, their inhabitants and all their wonderful works of art with them, to make a superb game of hide-and-seek for later generations?"

Nor does Nature end her games in the material world of man. Every truth, scientific or moral, which man has discovered, he has found hidden in swathings of error, or rather mixed with a disguising composite from which he slowly learns

to fuse away the slag, as he extracts the dross from the material in which the precious metals are embedded.

Another of the chief rules of the hide-and-seek game seems to be: The choicer the gift, the more craftily should it be concealed. This rule is so dear to Nature that she never departs from it in any of her bo-peep games, whether she plays with birds, flowers, precious stones, or the higher gifts in the world of thought and feeling. For the chattering sparrow and garrulous marten, that gossip to every chance-comer, there are no coverts prepared; but the nightingale is hedged about with woody privacies and special seasons and must be sought by those for whose finer ears its finer notes were conceived. Likewise the counterfeit gold of the dandelion and buttercup is flung broadcast upon every field and meadow, but the fragrant petals of the trailing

arbutus are hidden under the dead, brown leaves that cover the lower mountain slopes, where the flower-lover goes to woo it on his knees.

Not even when Nature is playing her greatest game, which is said to make the world go round, does she depart from her favorite rule. For does she not hide away, among several hopeless millions of irrelevant beings, the one only woman who is worth the search of the one only man foreordained for her?

On many other vexed problems that most nearly concern his public and private welfare, man must still play a game of hide-and-seek.

"Is monarchy or a republican form of government better?" asks man.

"Try both, and find out for yourself," answers the silence.

"Which is right, monogamy or polygamy?"

"Burn your fingers and you will know," is the silent response.

"Is the soul immortal?" cries man, and the same implacable silence answers, "You have only to die to find that out."

Something of the same principle of secrecy is discernible in Nature's personal bequests to the mind and heart of man. It is a wise man who has discovered the real quality and potentiality of his mental and moral ore in the disguising substance with which it is mixed. So it frequently happens that a man for a long time may work only his zinc and copper mines, modestly unconscious of the possession of gold and silver veins.

> "Unknown to Cromwell as to me
> Was Cromwell's measure or degree."

Among the best known authors of the day there are several who for many years occupied themselves with agricultural pursuits on land rich in gold and silver veins

of pathos and humor. On the other hand, many have persisted in carrying on mining operations in a region plainly adapted to nothing but the cultivation of farm produce.

As another result of Nature's system which provides a man with no well-mapped Baedeker of the territory of his own soul, it often comes to pass that a man and his nearest neighbor may be violently projected into space by an explosion of an unsuspected temperamental mine, or covered with burning lava from a volcano of whose existence the owner was unaware.

Nevertheless, whatever mishaps may be due to the bo-peep rules of Nature's game, one must conclude that more serious calamities would follow were she less reticent in her intercourse with mortals. What interest, indeed, or stimulus to endeavor or mere existence would be left

in the world, were all Nature's secrets suddenly divulged? And what pulseless monotony would ensue could a man make no further voyages of discovery into the now comparatively dark and unsurveyed hemispheres of self?

To guard against the chance of such monotony, even for her infinitely varied ego, does not Nature also play games with herself—a kind of gambling solitaire—almost surprising her wonder-filled soul with apparently capricious marvels of beauty? When first the gray and brown skeleton trees, rustic fences, and rude huts were robed in the night-time with fairy white draperies woven by the silent shuttles of Cloud-land, was the white enchantment foreseen by Nature, or was it an accidental enhancement of her beauty, like the down-falling tresses of a maiden, whose dancing has loosened the coils of her hair?

A similar interrogation floats down in the individual snowflake, falling one day in loose irregularity of shape, and the next in simple and complex star-forms of exquisite symmetry and kaleidoscopic diversity.

The scientist may try to hive our fancies by telling us that under certain atmospheric conditions the snowflake is bound to blossom into a perfect star, as the window-pane under other conditions will be utilized as a panel for the delicate star and frost designs frescoed upon it by the King of the Frost School. But the laws which control the flowering of the snowflake or its sister frost-star upon the window-pane seem to be subject to the frolicsome variations of an impromptu fancy, entirely different from the fixed laws which control the blossoming of the daisy or buttercup.

In the graceful vagaries of the frost-

star Nature seems to say, "Not all of my laws shall be decreed to yield unvarying results, lest they weary mankind and me."

Hence, some of her games of solitaire, as well as those she plays with man, are apparently played with dice—her storm-games, her colored picture-games of cloud- and shadow-land, the everchanging leaf-tints of autumn, the spots and markings in the fur of animals, and even the new combinations of form, feature, and mind in the human race.

In his inherited liking for games of chance man discovers tokens of his filial kinship to Nature. Like his dice-tossing mother, he, too, has games in which fixed laws determine the issues of his moves, and other games which he plays with the tricksy daughters of Chance, who lead him one day over flowery meads, and the next into a merciless maelstrom. Then,

as the swirling waters suck him in, Nature gurgles recklessly, "There goes another of my pawns!" For however independently man may think he plays his games, sooner or later Nature manages to become one of the players, making of man and his game a new game for herself.

Even when he plays his last losing game, Nature picks up his fallen cue and over his lifeless body raffles with earth, water, or fire, in a new and silent game of Transmutation, while eternity holds the stakes.

THE SALT LAKE OF LITERATURE.

"THERE, there; don't feel so bad. It isn't really poison, but black coffee the heroine is drinking, and the blood which follows the hero's suicidal dagger is made of harmless dye." Such were the comforting words whispered by her escort in the ear of a weeping matinée-goer. But still the sympathetic shower continued, for it was a very piteous scene, and all over the theater handkerchiefs and masculine comforters were doing their best to restore a dry season. Ivyl Kerioth, dramatic critic and single gentleman, with facial muscles well in control, scanned his fellow-weepers, and, following the lead of his whimsical fancy, roughly estimated that the total volume of tears shed over the tragedy he was witnessing, openly

and covertly, by masculine and feminine weepers, would easily fill a quart bottle. With this result as a unit of measure, he amused himself by carrying his computation still further. He made a mental list of all the tragedies that were being played in all the theaters of that city, and finally of all the theaters of other cities, in his own country, and all over the world.

At this point in his calculations Mr. Kerioth was obliged to pause from sheer inability to deal with such large numbers, for he had brought his lachrymal computations to several thousand gallons, which he was attempting to reduce to hogsheads, when the curtain rose and left his problem unfinished.

After emerging from the theater, however, his mind again reverted to the problem, which became still more complicated when he attempted to include an estimate

of all the tears which readers had shed from the time of the first pathetic book published, down to our own saline literary era. But his numbers had reached such mammoth proportions that he decided to leave the realm of pure mathematics.

"I will avail myself of metaphorical license," said Mr. Kerioth, "and reduce my result to terms of lake." After several trial processes, Mr. Kerioth felt satisfied with the approximate accuracy of the following result: "The tears shed by all the theater-goers in all the theaters of all the cities of all the world, in all ages, past and present, plus the sum of all the tears shed by the readers of all the pathetic literature ever published, would make a lake whose dimensions would nearly equal those of Salt Lake, Utah." This diffused and hitherto unrecognized body of water, to which your eye and mine,

my tender-hearted reader, have furnished many a tributary, Mr. Kerioth christened the Salt Lake of Literature.

Whether Mr. Kerioth's estimate was exaggerated or not is far from our purpose to prove. To quibble about a few barrels of tears more or less would show but a petty understanding of the spirit of Mr. Kerioth's investigations. The question for him and us is whether it is not time to ask if there is to be no limit to the amount of fictitious misery which may be added to a world already so full, from castle to cabin, of real tragedies? Shall we sit by, in acquiescence, while literature is turned into a great Bridge of Sighs, over which our reluctant souls must travel to discover the particular cemetery in which our novelists have laid their dead?

The Bible, scientists, and our own experience tell us that mirth and joy raise the tide of vitality, thereby improving the

health, disposition, and character; while sadness and grief, whether from real or fictitious causes, lower the vital tide, depress the spirits, and in a hundred ways make for unrighteousness.

By the time we reach maturity, most of us or our friends have taken part in some real tragedy. Every year, too, under all the superficial sheen of the world's brightness, the *Weltschmerz* throbs more heavily in our ears. Yet it seems that all this pain does not suffice us, and we must, forsooth, have another world of imaginary woes, duplicating and triplicating all the villains and villainies, pains, heartaches, desertions, disasters, and deaths that suspend their phantom swords above us in real life. It should be remembered, moreover, that the gratuitous griefs of this second literary world are invested with a perennial character. In the world of the quick, the mute and inglorious

take the various substitutes of hemlock and halter and pass on, seldom leaving more than one generation of mourners behind them. But the suicide in literature is not so; for generation after generation, in all ages and climes, weeps over his bier. For three centuries thousands and thousands have sighed and wept over Hamlet, King Lear, and Othello, and the same lachrymal impost will undoubtedly continue to be levied so long as the world and printing-presses endure. When one considers that all sympathy is an expenditure of force, is it not in point to ask whether so great an outlay of sympathy over histrionic and literary grief does not divert from its more legitimate channels the compassion which should find an outlet in efforts to relieve the genuine miseries of the world?

At this point several interlinear protests may be made by the scholar who believes

in the theory of the Aristotelian Katharsis, and the highly beneficial results of a spiritual harrowing, such as was effected by the old Greek tragedies. In the acetylene light of the twentieth century, however, one must discard many arguments that were valid enough for xyz B. C., when the world was still too young to have suffered much, and before authors, printing-presses, and sin had raised the tear tax to its present exorbitant rate.

Let one make but a random enumeration of the most popular books of the last few years, and before the mind's eye comes a long and mournful procession of Blighted Beings, the very mention of whose names is a signal for pectoral heavings: Evadne, Diavolo, The Tenor, Little Billee, Trilby, The Disagreeable Man, Little Brick, Flavia, Rudolph, Weelum MacLure, Jamie Soutar, Reverend and Mrs. Theron Ware, Georgiana, John Gray,

Jessica, Petronius, Eunice, John Storm, Gloria Quayle, The Gad-Fly, Hugh Scarlett, Tommy and Grizel, Allegra and Raphael Dominick, Cyrano de Bérgerac and Quisante.

And so, with additions from older novelists and those yet to come, one might stretch the line out to the crack of doom, drawing large enrollments of sorrowful ones from the works of George Eliot, Thackeray, Dickens, Scott, Hardy, Hall Caine, Hawthorne, Mrs. Stowe, and our generally cheerful Howells, not to mention possible legions of sad-eyed recruits from Russian, Norwegian, French, German, and Italian fiction. Nor may our forcèd suspirations cease when we lay down the novel. Between the sighs expended over the last tragic romance read, and the next one that comes our way, we perchance think to soothe ourselves with the lighter fancies of a summer magazine. But alas!

L. of C.

over all is the trail of the tear. Even the short story of the magazine would admirably serve the purpose of the prophet Jeremiah, who wished that his eyes might be "a fountain of tears."

Worst of all, no reasonable remonstrance can be made against anything so fine as some of the pathos found in the short magazine story, and the same difficulty is encountered when one tries to make any but general objections to the harrowing masterpieces of literature. In most cases the reader, in spite of the mellow emendations made by his heart, reluctantly agrees with the author that his tragedy had to end as it did, as inevitably as the final explosion must follow the lighting of the end of the fuse.

Yet, our plaint may not end here. If we are damp with sympathy in the humid atmosphere of prose fiction, how drenched is our condition as we walk the

tear-dewed fields of poesy, where not only men and women add their bass and treble to the literary dirge, but the glad and peaceful flowers and birds are coerced to furnish material for pathetic fallacy. The rose glows bright with its own beautiful blushes, but along comes the poet, and, plucking its petals, leaves the thorn behind—in his stanzas—for us. Anon, another poet finds the aster, joyous purple with the last wine of summer, and proceeds to make a poignant composite of his own biography and the flower's, in this wise:

"As Apollo wrote, while his woe flowed faster,
His sad 'ai, ai' on the hyacinth leaf,
So for dead summer, O mourning aster,
Thy purple is pale as with silent grief.
Love no more and yet love remembered,
Is the tale which thou and they can tell
Who sigh over life's last fire low-embered,
O love's lost summer, for aye farewell!

"O golden-eyed, sky-purpled flower,
In the silent sunlight born to shine!
A fellow-heir to an equal dower,
Our lots are the same, both thine and mine!

To come on earth a short-lived comer,
Between a morning and evening bell,
To wake between winter and waning summer,
To see the world and to say farewell."

Even the wee, cheerful, bright-eyed mousie, living in unconscious tune with the universe, the poet waylays and apostrophizes until he has wrung from his timorous breast another text of woe.

"The best-laid schemes of mice and men gang
aft agley,"

and

"Oh, I backward cast my e'e
On prospects drear,
And forward, though I cannot see,
I guess and fear,"

which the mouse, a better philosopher, never does.

Admitting, as we must, that the sweetest songs have told of saddest thought, we must also admit that poets do sometimes get into ruts; or, to speak in more veiled language, they develop a morbid fondness for rowing Melpomene's bark—

with Alas! and Ah me! for poetical paddles—on a Dead Sea of bitter recollections and gloomy forebodings. When one finds a poet who persists in the continual use of rhythmical crêpe, one cannot help suspecting that there is back of his habit the same cause which makes a pretty widow cling to her weeds many years after they have ceased to be a symbol of grief. Both the poet and the widow think the crêpe is becoming, and so they continue to use it, the one in her dress and the other in his diction.

And the sighs of admiration and sympathy elicited by it, are they not sweet?

But one should not fail to acknowledge in latter-day poetry many improvements over the ancient manner of wailing. The modern poet dresses the skeleton at his feast in clothes that do not reveal his grim contours so clearly as they were exposed in the elder days of art, as one

may ascertain for himself by comparing some of the grisly ballads of olden times with the minstrelsy of the last half-century. A similar evolution of expression is evident in parallel readings from the good old hymn-books and those now in use. Reading the former, it is easy to understand why groans were so important a feature of primeval religion. Where we sing, "Lead, Kindly Light," our quaking ancestors sang:

"Stop, poor sinner, stop and think
Before you farther go.
Can you sport upon the brink
Of everlasting woe?
Hell beneath is gaping wide,
Vengeance waits the dread command,
Soon to stop your sport and pride,
And sink you with the damn'd.

"Though your hearts be made of steel,
Your forehead lined with brass,
God at length will make you feel;
He will not let you pass.
Sinners then in vain will call,
Though they now despise his grace;
Rocks and mountains on us fall
And hide us from his face."

The Salt Lake of Literature

With the gradual mellowing of theology has come a corresponding mellowing in the hymns of the church. Neither the clergyman nor hymn-writer makes hell "gape" quite so wide as his predecessor did. In profane literature, the same elimination of the horrible, if not of the pathetic, has been taking place. If Shakespere were to rewrite "King Lear" in our day, it is altogether possible that he would omit the superfluous ferocity of the scene in which the old King is deprived of his eyesight. We have accepted such scenes in the classics, as we have some of the literary abominations of the Old Testament, till we are wonted to their hideousness; but that fact should no longer countenance the course of the author who creates a literary chamber of horrors as revolting and vulgar as its more realistic counterpart at the Eden Musée.

A reasonable amount of woe and deso-

lation one is willing to concede to the author who takes his plots from life. Nevertheless, from his most faultlessly true art one is now and then prone to turn back for consolation to his childhood books of fairy-tales, where, in a miniature heaven of the imagination, the wailing and gnashing of teeth are the exclusive rôle of the wicked, and virtue gets something more than its bleak and traditional reward.

Any conclusions with regard to the justifiableness of the wholesale production of pathetic literature should not ignore the attitude of children toward the tale which does not furnish its heroes and heroines a happy issue out of all their afflictions. Most children will promptly veto the second telling of a story that does not bring forth its Shadrachs and Meshachs with every hair unsinged. One little boy I know insists upon a revised

sequel to all the sad stories which are told him. When his mother invents thrilling narratives of squirrels and chipmunks that cross dark, swollen rivers on chips and shingles, the quiver of little lips warns her that, though a dipping or two may be conceded, not a single furry mariner may be allowed to perish.

It is doubtful whether children of a larger growth ever wholly outgrow the covert desire to have the tangled threads straightened out in the last chapter, having read enough in the pages of life of the crooked that can never be made straight. It is, indeed, for this very reason that feminine fingers so often turn the pages of a novel *a l'hebreu*. For, notwithstanding all she has seen, heard, and read, the average feminine reader, with faith distancing the mustard-seed, in the annulling and rectifying influences of matrimony, is secretly hoping to find

a nice, fat clergyman with a benign pronunciamento hovering over the last scene in the last chapter.

We therefore entreat the gentle author, as much as in him lies, to keep this average woman from chilling disappointments. Before he again uses that drop of ink which "makes a million think," let him ask himself whether it will also cause a million tears or a million smiles.

If, however, it is his unavoidable destiny to be the creator of a hero exuding woe at every pore, let him strive to give his readers a little afterglow before the great final darkness, as Thackeray did in the closing vision of the Newcomes and Holmes in his tale of "The Little Gentleman," whose death was deliverance and whose last sacrament was the hallowed kiss of Iris.

Or, should it be impossible for the author of the sable-tipped quill to achieve

a literary sunset of this cast, let him assuage the sympathetic pains of his readers by applying homeopathic or allopathic principles, or both, in the dénouement of his plot, after the manner of Hamlet. In this play one grief is the counter-irritant of another till the last scene, when the allopathic treatment of the King's death is introduced. With four different emotions in simultaneous contention, the local strain caused by the concentration of one emotion is obviously diminished, with the result that the four deaths are more supportable than Hamlet's alone would have been.

Viewing the stark quartette in the last scene the reader finds his grief for Hamlet very well parried by a pagan glee at the taking-off of the King, as well as by the remembrance that Ophelia is no more; while undue sentiment over the death of Laertes is checked by a vision of the en-

venomed rapier. Whether the death of a woman of such "slight elements" as the Queen could reach deep enough to produce any emotion is a question upon which readers may differ. For the average mourner, it is probable that impious resignation is the most palpable emotion occasioned by "Gertrude's" decease.

An unknown critic has discovered a further foreshadowing of relief in Hamlet's entreaty, "absent thee from felicity awhile." "Hamlet," says this critic, "did not wish Horatio to absent himself from felicity *forever* to tell his story, but only for '*awhile*.'"

On the basis of this subtle conjecture, fancy may paint an afterglow of hope, even for the bereft Horatio.

ETHICAL BALANCES.

"In men whom men condemn as ill
I find so much of goodness still,
In men whom men pronounce divine
I find so much of sin and blot,
I do not dare to draw a line
Between the two, where God has not."

—*Joaquin Miller.*

NATURE'S rule of doing nothing by leaps finds no more interesting and perplexing illustration than in the imperceptible gradations of less and more by which she passes from a good man or woman to a bad one. So well-nigh endless is her line of variations and combinations before she makes a downright good or bad man that one feels that anything like an absolute standard of ethical measurement is impossible, and that even the adjectives *good* and *bad*—applied to men and women—should always be used with a suffixed plus or minus sign, to indicate relativity,

as well as the element of incalculability that is present in all morality. For example, Mr. Haycock is a good man minus, and Mr. Slumville is a bad man plus.

Even were sins and sinners a fixed and constant quantity, another complication arises in the grade and ability of those who sit in judgment. Moreover, the point of view of the saintly sinner and the sinful saint who weigh the shortcomings of others is continually shifting with the changing perspective of years and experience. The problem of moral judgments is further complicated by Nature's tenacious application of the same rule of avoiding leaps in passing from purely moral—or heart—qualities to purely mental ones. A degree of stupidity, in its results, is often as disastrous as considerable willful perversity. "It is worse than a crime—it is a blunder," voices the feeling of many besides Talleyrand, who have been obliged

to come in daily contact with stupidity. "*Mit Dummheit kämpfen die Götter selbst vergebens*" expresses the despair which only obtuseness can arouse.

A long line of qualities, to which the code of Sinai makes no allusion, have nearly as much frictional force in their presence, or absence, as the absence of the so-called cardinal virtues which the Ten Commandments were designed to preserve. Some experience with the painful or impersonable saint and the genial and fastidious sinner undoubtedly accounts for Emerson's frank confession: "I could better eat with one who did not respect the truth or the laws than with a sloven or an unpresentable person. Moral qualities rule the world, but at short distances the senses are despotic."

The subtle difficulty in estimating the relative availability and durability of mental and moral qualities of different

men may be one of the causes which account for the *yes* which is so often latent in the most truthful woman's *no*; a *no* that has done such faithful service as a theme for masculine wit and philosophy. But no man knoweth—or at least no man telleth—of his own mental zigzagging from yes to no along the route of indecision that finally lands him at the yea-and-nay junction of some woman's will.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, nearly all this zigzagging is the result of an effort to balance qualities and characteristics whose moral specific gravity fluctuates under the different exigencies of life so that no exact ratio of measurement is obtainable. A combination of imagination, common-sense, tact, and humor will sometimes look even a frowning Providence out of countenance, when solemn and sluggish goodness—so called—could only look blank and numbly resigned.

Thus by ethical assay one discovers that goodness and virtue are not simple elements, but resolvable into an indefinite number of constituents, of which many are not associated with goodness at all; for every virtue has a double parentage—in the heart and head—and every so-called mental quality is sib to a virtue or vice. Fancy, whose birthplace even Shakespere could not determine, is so blithe and delectable a gift, and withal so effectual as a matrimonial tether, that its entire absence in a life-partner calls for heavy compensations of some sort. Likewise humor, its near kin, is so certain a pledge of sanity, good cheer, and comradeship that the man in whom it is wholly lacking is sure to give as much pain negatively, to one type of woman, as some other man may by a positive fault.

Half of the luminous quips and fantasies which naturally suggest themselves to

Mr. Saltus Atticus he cannot communicate to his wife, because they would be lost. In her company he falls, perforce, into the habit of eliminating all but the more obvious of his musings, while all his lighter, finer fancies are still-born, leaving behind them only the dumb yearning that follows futile parturition.

Mrs. De Profundis, also, learns in sadness that no pearl that she may bring up from her deepest divings will pass for more than a common pebble to the man whom—in an improvident hour—she took for richer or poorer. "He was a good man and brave," writes Professor Roberts of one of his heroes, "and a woman could trust him to do anything except to keep her from yawning."

Instinct may sometimes feel, but Nature alone knows the true valuation of all the gifts that make up the mental and moral equipment of her children. Would she only

now and then give us the key to the system by which she so accurately computes the quantivalents of brain and heart power! Meanwhile, we can only guess at the figures in her table of moral weights and measures, and by much blind factoring demonstrate the incorrectness of other people's answers to similar problems. A case in point is the purely mental tabulation commonly assigned to accuracy, when in reality conscience is always one of its prime factors. So good workmanship of any kind, generally credited exclusively to the brain, is an almost infallible token of a sound conscience, and an ideal whose demands are exacting. The most accurate and thorough Latin teacher whom I ever knew was a man whose conscience made as fine exactions in all the relations of life as those which he respected in the laws of quantity. It was, therefore, only one of several logical se-

quences that he was called "a gentleman *ad unguem*" by the unanimous verdict of his pupils.

But theologians have for centuries measured men and women by such deceitful and elastic phrases as "sound in the faith" and "a follower of the old landmarks," regardless of the fact that the old landmarks witnessed a great many disgraceful doings. Who of us likewise does not know the rural region where "he ain't a professor"—meaning that he is not connected with any church—is only one remove from absolute condemnation; and "wandered from the faith"—in the same arid zone of interpretation—is a vaguely comprehensive phrase made to cover every phase of doubt from timid falterings over the sanctity of the patriarchs and Solomon's ménage, to bold misgivings concerning the lucidity and efficacy of the Trinitarian concept? But the day has already

come when dumb acquiescence to certain dogmas is known to be quite as often a sign of moral and intellectual sloth and incapacity as of religious girth and sinew.

In a bleaker generation, virtues and vices had two colors only, apparently, cardinal and black; or those who sat in the seats of judgment may have been endowed with a less delicate sense of discrimination. But like the endless variations of shade that have been evolved from the old-fashioned colors are the varied tints and tones of modern morality. As every virtue, by a process of evolution, seems capable of taking on finer and more scrupulous interpretations in its application to the various problems of life, so every vice has a corresponding possibility of being refined into shades of invisibility, or into tints almost indistinguishable from those of virtue itself. And in these very possi-

bilities may be found the *pons asinorum* of ethical geometry. For one man's virtues may be in such a crude and cornersome stage of development that they will offend more than the refined faults of another man.

Most mature people have met the painful saint and the pleasant sinner, and after the meeting they find themselves readjusting all their old standards of judgment, having discovered in the distribution and combination of virtues and vices something very similar to the gingerly method with which Nature doles out beauty in the human face. The perfect face is rarely found, and, even when found, it may have been purchased at the price of a fearful mortgage upon the intelligence of its possessor, so that it fails to satisfy the inner eye of the understanding as may a less perfect face in which expression illuminates a plain-featured text. If she gives a good

pair of eyes, Nature is very reluctant to give a good nose or mouth; or, if she does very fine work on the nose and mouth, she is likely to scamp her work on the eyes and forehead. Precisely the same system seems to obtain in her dole of moral beauty. She gives one man a free helping of the cardinal virtues, but scrimps her gift of the graces, so that virtue suffers ill repute because of its setting. To another man she gives only two or three virtues, but puts them in such an extremely attractive setting of grace that they, and sometimes—alas!—their contingent vices, are more effectual than the other man's dozen of virtues.

To another man she gives a prodigal allowance of mental and moral gifts, but places him where his early environment blights half his best possibilities before they have had a chance to unfold. Consider the mythical case of Amos Kar-

mel, who is endowed with the finest intellectual and moral sense and a strong will-power which may be represented by 9x. But the temptations which fate arrays in the pathway of Mr. Karmel happen to be of 10x power, and the result is his downfall and disgrace, the more disastrous because he is keenly sensitive to his own degradation.

Another man, Mr. Cornly, of far less mental or moral ability and a will-power which may be designated by 4x, happens to be confronted with only 3x temptations, and, though the effort which he puts forth to resist them is less than half as much as in the case of Mr. Karmel, the result is success, a clear conscience and a saved reputation.

To one who knows all the causes and all the resisting power in cases like these, the world's labels seem too superficially obtained to be of much value. Mr. Kar-

mel may have been a very bad man, but there is little doubt that with all his sins he has resisted more temptations to other sins than ten men like Mr. Cornly. His is a case like the French nobleman's, of whom it was said that "the Lord would have to think twice before damning him." In the same class with Mr. Karmel belong the Tommies found in every rank and calling of life. Men and women in whom "the accursed thing, which is in all of us, may be so strong that to battle with it and be beaten is not altogether to fail."

Following the trend of these musings it is not difficult to understand why so many good women have loved and sometimes married men whom the world has too briefly catalogued as bad—men of the type of Aaron Burr, whose good qualities were not negotiable at any of the public banks where drafts for reputations are honored. By instinct, a woman sometimes feels

what Shakespere may have discovered in some other way, that

> 'The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,
> And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
> Neighbored by fruit of baser quality."

So it occasionally happens that a woman, like a wise numismatist, may prefer a damaged, gold coin—of rare design and superscription—to the most perfect of untarnished coppers just from the mint. Sometimes, indeed, the most accurate and convincing proof of the real merit and excellence of a man's character may be found in the number of sins which people are willing to forgive him. This, however, is not the easy philosophy of the highway to which a drunkard by the gutter's brink a drunkard is and nothing more, be he a silent hero like Charles Lamb, or any idle vagabond that goes down to dusty death by the paths of incelebrity.

Yet lenient judgments are frequently

criticised on the ground that they are influenced by personal feeling, and such a criticism is merited when sentimentality puts a premium on sin and crime by throwing bouquets at the sinners. On the other hand, judgments based upon the conclusions of gray matter, alone, are quite as likely to miss the mark of justice as those determined chiefly by the feelings. In the solution of problems of mathematics and science, the head has no occasion to call upon the heart for assistance; but in moral problems, the discovery of the value of the xyz of temperament, environment, and motive cannot be performed by purely mental processes. It was probably ordained that mind and heart should revise and sometimes reverse each other's decisions. When such a revision is not allowed, the result is a distorted verdict like the one that called Heine "that German pig."

It is largely because of its imperfect and faulty estimates of men and measures that history has been called "a Mississippi of Falsehood." Sacred and profane records alike are full of names upon which contending traditions and historians have alternately heaped obloquy and praise. And who can tell us which is the truth? Queen Elizabeth, Mary Stuart, Marie Antoinette, Cromwell, and Savonarola are only a few of the names, of which each has called forth the most contradictory opinions. Even the celebrities who have been most unanimously elected to their niche of fame cannot be insured against the iconoclastic hammers of later investigators. Only a few months ago such new and disillusionizing statements were published about Luther as might well make his disciples drop their bibles—or beer-steins—in horror.

Later still, comes to light testimony

that will make uncanonical history of the legends that painted Carlyle "unco fey to live wi'." And finally there has arisen an American who has delved among dusty records to bring forth shining vestments for Aaron Burr.

Thus do all our judgments judge us with their fugitive and imperfect character, the while they exonerate their victims. Even our devil—once denounced by theologians in dread tones of certainty—is now everywhere admitted to be not so black as he is painted.

How have such errors crept into history? perhaps we ask, when some discovery destroys an old illusion or tricks us with a new one. The answer is easy for any one who reads the current newspapers and magazines, which will furnish many a fact and fancy to the historian of our own times. History in the making could hardly find a better sample of it-

self than is given by Professor Münsterberg in his edifying book, "American Traits":

"In the German language the adjective 'American' is usually connected with but three things. The Germans speak of American stores, and mean a kind of store which I have never seen in this country; they speak of American duels, and mean an absurd sort of duel which was certainly never fought on this continent; and finally they speak of American humbug, and mean by it that kind of humbug which flourishes in Berlin just as in Chicago. But the American man is of course very well known. He is a haggard creature, with vulgar tastes and brutal manners, who drinks whisky and chews tobacco, spits, fights, puts his feet on the table, and habitually rushes along in wild haste, absorbed by a greedy desire for the dollars of his neighbor. He does not

care for education or for art, for the public welfare or for justice, except so far as they mean money to him. Corrupt from top to toe, he buys legislation and courts and government; and when he wants fun, he lynches innocent negroes on Madison Square in New York or in the Boston Public Garden. He has his family home usually in a sky-scraper of twenty-four stories; his business is founded on misleading advertisements; his newspapers are filled with accounts of murders; and his churches swarm with hypocrites."

Although Professor Münsterberg has made a heroic attempt to assist Truth to rise again from the very crushed condition to which his nation has reduced her, it is doubtful whether she will be able to walk on German soil—without limping—for several decades to come.

The first meeting of any two people—and their immediate and later judgments

of each other—especially if they are of different races, are always as unique and interesting as the result of a new combination of gases or acids in the laboratory. On meeting hydrogen, the majority of her fellow-elements would doubtless pronounce her a somewhat stiff and distant or even a snobbish gas; but when oxygen is introduced to her, other verdicts are reversed and her qualities find a new and ardent appreciation. The psychical counterpart of this chemical game of the elements is piquantly set forth by Emerson: "Do you think the youth has no force because he cannot speak to you and me? Hark! in the next room who spoke so clear and emphatic? Good heavens! it is he! it is that very lump of bashfulness and phlegm which for weeks has done nothing but eat when you were by, that now rolls out these words like bell-strokes."

Not only are we a thousand different selves to as many different people whose influence in a greater or less degree conditions our thought and speech; but as the sea continually changes color and tide under the influence of the sun and moon, so do we differ from hour to hour under the varying conditions with which life tries us, and no man knows our general average. Clouds, sun, rain, snow, heat, cold, food, drink, raiment, success, and failure, if called upon the witness-stand, would each give a different report of the same man's character. Likewise, hunger, thirst, health, wealth, and illness have been known to change the entire pitch of the self's expression. How many a man is there whose physical debilities so encroach upon the soul's delectable grounds that the fullest possibilities of what the real self might be, under normal physical conditions, is never apparent except under the influence

of some stimulus! From this point of view there was less of paradox than the ear catches in the admonition which Lamb's sister gave him, "Go and drink, Charles, and be yourself."

Effects like these, wrought by a cause so palpably artificial, we are wont to dismiss with an inherited shrug of disapproval; but there are a great many different kinds of stimuli. Some of the causes which affect our own estimates of ourselves are scarcely less artificial than those which originate in grape-juice. When a woman of the highest genius could assert that the consciousness of being well-dressed imparts an inward tranquillity which all the comforts of religion fail to bestow, what can be expected of the methods of self-valuation adopted by the average man or woman whose religious experience is a somewhat nebulous affair? If the facts were published, the real grounds for

our opinions of ourselves would furnish many choice examples of *non sequitur*. A certain amount of inerrancy in self-knowledge may be possible to a very simple man who has the natural cleavage of sainthood, and no observable cleavage in any other direction. But self-knowledge is quite another matter for those who have a cleavage in so many directions that they feel themselves brothers and sisters to the mutable Mrs. Hawksbee, whom Kipling has celebrated: "At a moderate estimate there were about three-and-twenty sides to that lady's character. Some men say more."

Upon this very mobility of the soul, which furnishes the world with so many conflicting testimonies, the meliorist stakes his strongest hope, while his despair is the man who cannot change. On the other hand, the posssibility of a certain fixity of character, through all the phases

in which it manifests itself, is a belief which most of us cherish—especially of ourselves; a fixity like the course and marginal contour of a river whose waters are continually changing, now swollen by limpid showers from heaven and anon by mundane tributaries of more doubtful composition. What the color, volume, and velocity may be a hundred or two hundred miles from its source, the mountain brook never knows. Nor more closely guessed are our capacities for good or evil. The diamond, though the hardest substance known, can be changed to graphite when subjected to intense heat. The air, also, after resisting the tests of many centuries, at last—in liquid form—surrenders its old reputation with the disclosure of most biting characteristics. So the most reticent and discreet man, though his discretion has served him well with ten thousand and two people, may

find somewhat in the ten thousand and third which will unlock his reserve and plunder its treasure.

Moreover, it sometimes suits the whimsy of Chance to single out such unique experiences and publish them as representative. After this manner are reputations made and unmade, and centuries may come and go before slow-handed Justice audits and corrects the false accounts of Time.

The larger share of the false estimates of moral as well as mental qualities are obviously due to the fact that "a man is appreciated only by his equals or superiors," and, fortunately or unfortunately, there are few people who are in all respects the equals of anybody else. It was, then, a more universal dilemma than Hegel knew he was describing when he said that only one man understood him, and he misunderstood him. When even those who understand misunderstand, it is not logi-

cal to expect precision in the duck's opinion of the nightingale. And how many ducks attempt the rôle of musical critic! And how many, alas! of the world's judgments are made by people who weigh everything on hay-scales—good, kind people who ask, "What's the use of an education if you ain't going to teach?" As though a forest in whose tree-tops the poet's fancies go nesting with the birds, should be valued solely for the amount of lumber that can be taken from it.

But of such are the judgments of the market-place:

> "The butcher that served Shakespere with his meat
> Doubtless esteemed him little, as a man
> Who knew not how the market-prices ran."

To the want-wit the mental treasures of his neighbor will be forever under lock and key, even as the complex sources of disposition and character are hidden from the man whose own spirit is numb and

unresponsive. A beam of light that falls upon a dark, opaque body will never disclose its mystic color-treasure, but let it fall upon a mirror or prism and straightway its latent rainbows are revealed. This prismatic or refracting power is possessed by people of insight—which is the twin-sister of sympathy—and their judgments are likely to go back of symptoms and effects as Stevenson's did when he wrote Sidney Colvin that some one's "headache was cross," a discriminating touch matched by Howells in his explanation of the disposition of Mela Dryfoos: "She felt too well corporeally ever to be quite cross."

By popular verdicts, however, amiability is imputed to its possessor for righteousness, regardless of the fact that in a majority of cases the much-applauded "even disposition" is only an unanalyzed euphuism for bovine placidity, meriting little more credit than the unruffled, unreasoned

serenity of a Jersey cow. Who has not met the healthy man or woman who is transformed into a dangerous character by a toothache or a touch of neuralgia?

Only a very small per cent of the world's judgments question what lies back of a man's acts, or weigh the unknown motives that turn the scale when a good deed is done, or an evil one left undone. In the days when orthodoxy shed its more lurid beams upon the ways of the wicked, the fear of hell had an undeniable power to "haud the wretch in order," and its constraining force sometimes seemed to succeed in grafting the fruits of righteousness upon the scrubbiest kind of a tree. Lesser fears were—and still are—responsible for many a good or bad deed of omission or commission. Nearly three-fourths of the conduct of Mr. Henpecked are overruled, not by an immediate Providence, but by fear of his wife. The result may be

almost flawless propriety on the part of that gentleman, so far as outward observances go, but inwardly he may be not many removes from a coward.

In other instances, fear of what one's neighbor or society may say is the ruling influence in a man or woman's life. In some respects this possibility is fortunate, since the sum total of good conduct is undeniably increased by outer restraints which influence the acts of those who would never feel the finer restraints of honor. But while some of the visible results of this external coercion may be identical with the effects of a higher inner compulsion, which guides the man of honor, the amount of merit and respect due in the two cases is by no means identical.

Mr. Circumspect drops a five-dollar bill upon the contribution-plate, and the man who sits nearest to him may do the same.

But though their financial conditions may be precisely the same, it by no means follows that each will be credited with five dollars in the apocryphal ledger of the recording angel. The celestial entry for one man may be: Two dollars from force of habit, which originated in a mixed impulse, compounded of very unequal parts of fear, charity, and an imitative instinct, and three dollars for the eyes of the deacons who passed the plates and the brethren and sisters nearest the contributor.

The other man's entry may be: One dollar from force of habit—whose origin may be too complex for the imagination to decipher—and the other four, to be seen of men. Any pastor who doubts the possibility of such uncomplimentary entries against the members of his flock, should hold an evening service and order the electricity to be turned off while his

deacons are passing the plates. Then he might compare the donations made in the darkness with those given in the broad light of day. At first, of course, the good people would be on their guard and their givings might be doubled. But if the system were continued indefinitely the "natural current" would set in, and most interesting statistics could be gathered.

How many churches, I wonder, would dare to take up their "offerings" in the dark? If some pastor wished to put his congregation "on their honor," as some professors do their pupils by leaving them alone during a written examination, he might adopt a device like the one here suggested. It would possibly wound the feelings of those who make their contributions independently of external considerations; but it might also waken a sense of honor in some of the others, and when that sense had acquired the habit of be-

ing awake enough to be trusted not to doze, the Church could return to its old methods.

In this connection, the tale of little Jimmy's scientific begging—though not complimentary to womankind—deserves a hearing:

Tommy—"Why didn't ye touch that high-stepping lady fer a quarter?"

Jimmy—"Wool in yer tinker; she was alone. When there's two of 'em each shells out handsome, so the other won't think she's stingy, see?"

Other men and women give alms like Barrie's Mary, in "Two of Them." "My charities," declared that impulsive heroine, "are only a hideous kind of selfishness. I never give anything to that poor man on the street corner because I see he needs it, but only occasionally when I feel happier than usual."

If one could sift the policies of nations

in war and in peace, similar dividends of chaff would be found among the motives behind nearly every act that looms large on the heroic horizon. How many a purpose that starts out erect and single-eyed shows crooked and double-eyed ere half its race is run! "What would some other power do, or how will this affect the public coffers?" is the vitiating fear that has wasted more than one nation's golden opportunity.

As the motives behind public and private acts are hidden, so, likewise, are those behind the deeds that are planned, but never executed, the enterprises whose "currents turn awry and lose the name of action."

Simple slothful procrastination of wrong-doing—such as Browning celebrates in "The Statue and the Bust"—may be the cause which robs many an undone iniquity of its small negative savor of right-

eousness. If the procrastination is due to a lack of courage, or the mere absence of opportunity, it is an open question whether the culprit who has not the spirit to carry out his purposes does not stand upon a lower plane than his fellow-sinner who boldly accomplishes his designs.

It is also conceivable that the man who for a long time harbors an evil purpose is (himself) more contaminated by its corrosive influence than he would have been had he executed it and antidoted its remembrance with genuine remorse.

A good deed, likewise, may be so long procrastinated that, when it is performed, equity should deduct from its face value a large discount equal to the interest on the act from the proper time of its performance to the actual date of its doing. The man who procrastinates is a first cousin to the man who does not keep his promises. If he procrastinates

long enough, they are one and the same. Tito Melema intended to pay the ransom for his foster-father's liberty, *some time*, but he never did. The chronic procrastinator is generally a coward in the making.

Closely related to this subject is "A Study in Black Sheep," a chapter from the diary of Elbertini, the hermit philosopher of Nulpart. Elbertini devoted several years of his life to the collection of biographical data concerning such blemished celebrities as Francois Villon, Paul Verlaine, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Byron, Turner, Charles the Second, and a score of other heroes of the same piebald genus. "In each of these men," writes Elbertini, "the lowest vices and the most exalted virtues continually bouted with each other for supremacy. By the same wide measure by which they surpassed the ordinary man on the finer sides of their natures,

theyrfell below him in the depth of degradation to which they allowed themselves to sink. Their characters, indeed, suggested a fabric capriciously woven of the rarest kind of gold thread alternating with fibers of the coarsest of common hemp.

"Yet each man appointed and kept terrible judgment days with himself, when all the evidence for and against the defendant was self-measured with a candor rarely known in more public tribunals. In addition to the records of these self-judgments—found in their poems and letters to friends—one finds touching incidental testimony to their habit of introspection in the fact that seventeen of these ill-starred celebrities, in their later years, made a collection of portraits and biographies of others as badly eminent as themselves, and in eleven of these cases the collectors published enthusiastic de-

fenses of a number of their brethren whose blackness they pathetically endeavored to bleach by setting their more ingratiating qualities over against the lesser lapses of some notoriously angular saint; . . . a proceeding," concludes Elbertini, "which would have come with better grace, and withal more convincingly, from one of the saints than from one of the sinners."

Balancing his own accounts, the ungodly man is prone to make evil chance shoulder—and perhaps justly—some of the responsibility for his misdeeds. But the man of good character is generally happy in the belief that the credit for his deportment belongs entirely to himself, forgetting that from the achievements of character, as from all others, no man can exclude that invisible factor, chance, which—happening to them all—keeps the race from the swift and the battle from the strong. The best men, in proportion to their

honesty and clearness of vision, have most frankly acknowledged the presence of this unseen and unmeasured force, as Emerson did in his stanza, "Grace":

> "How much, preventing God, how much I owe
> To the defenses Thou hast round me set;
> Example, custom, fear, occasion slow,
> These scorned bondmen were my parapet.
> I dare not peep over this parapet
> To gauge with glance the roaring gulf below,
> The depths of sin to which I had descended,
> Had not these me against myself defended."

With equal modesty, Marcus Aurelius finds an external ancestor for each one of his virtues, tracing their origin to various kinsmen and friends; and when, after an exhaustive enumeration, he still finds in himself a few more virtues, unaccounted for, any residue of merit that might attach to himself he gratefully and ingenuously makes over to the gods.

SEVERAL WORDS TO THE WISE.

"Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon."

THE Gradgrinds are a long-lived race, and, while their breath is in them, in vain may authors who pass through their hands hope to be known, save as reels around which to wind an appalling number of dates, stock phrases, and well-frayed opinions.

In view of this fact and the extraordinary vitality of the Gradgrinds, a direct appeal is made to authors themselves. Let no thoughtless genius say in his heart that posterity's memory will be sufficient unto the evil of its day. The limit of forced information may be reached, and an age may come when pupils will succumb in the attempt to learn the details

of the nine thousandth man of importance. For the purveyors of so-called education are too often, like the lawyers, denounced by Holy Writ, who "lade men with burdens grievous to be borne."

That these burdens, now rolling up into a veritable Pelion for posterity, may be in a measure lightened, we beseech the sympathetic ear of great ones yet to be. Thus far, history shows that nearly all famous men have been inexcusably inconsiderate of the effects of their actions on posterity. Whole nations, even, have been culpable in this respect. Impelled by some local and transitory disturbance, they have selfishly indulged in countless unnecessary wars, utterly regardless of the continual strain which posterity must undergo to remember their dates, causes, and effects. Perchance the heroes and sages of other days could not foresee the grievances which they were forcing upon

succeeding generations. Few of them may have dreamed that their names, habits, and peculiarities—along with the date of their advent into the world and their exit from it—would be made into an intellectual *pièce de résistance* for growing youths. But with the example of inconsiderate authors before them, there is no longer any excuse for continued negligence on the part of those whose greatness is as yet in the bud.

For still other reasons the wooers of fame are earnestly entreated to cast a searching eye down the Avernian slopes of the future, and view the inevitable results of the book-worship into which the civilized world is steadily drifting. After such an inspection, can one fail to see the dawn of the day when original ideas will have become impossible, save upon the lonely moors and hilltops of illiteracy, where Nature, unrivaled, still

calls from her own deeps to the untroubled deeps in the soul of man? A few simple souls that dwell beyond the echoes of Bookdom will perhaps remain to illustrate the primitive processes of purely original thinking. But the thoughts of the "well-read man" will have become as a swollen torrent—or, worse, a sluggish pool—fed by the millions of literary rivulets that have crossed the centuries between David the Psalmist and David the Harumite, and man will have ceased to possess any very permanent and differentiated ego, his brain having degenerated into a dark limbo of other men's ideas.

When an incipient celebrity has given serious audience to such grave possibilities as these, there will be but one course which he can follow, if he has the good of his race at heart, namely, turning a blind eye to all the coquettings of fame, to spend the fire of genius in some cov-

ertly benign way, which cannot be made recountable to posterity. In other words, he may do as much good by stealth as he chooses, but he should so cover his stealth with a second cloak of stealth that he will "never blush to find it fame."

But few men will be prepared to reach this high pitch of altruism. Yet a second compromising course is open to those who must have fame. The man of renown should do all in his power to make the facts which pertain to his life easy of assimilation. This may require no little foresight on his part, but he ought to feel amply repaid by the thought that he is lightening the labors of those who are to come after him. Imprimis, there is much in a name, especially if it is hard to remember. The Latin maxim, *Prima lex naturæ parentes deligere*, as translated by the philosophical youth, should be the motto of the man of fame:

"It is the first law of Nature that children should choose their parents."

There is another consideration which is properly prior to this; namely, the choice of one's birthplace. Numerous instances come to mind of heedless authors who have been born in old historical towns, whose complex influence it has been necessary to trace upon the author and his works. The modest and considerate author will be born in the country, in a lone house, miles from any neighbor. There he will live as long as it is possible for him to learn anything. This will greatly simplify his external relations with the world, and save his biographers an endless amount of trouble. Moreover, it will redound to his credit to be great, with comparatively little in his environment to make him so.

The second care of the genius will be the choice of a suitable name. For reasons

already mentioned, short and attractive names are most desirable. Foreign names should be avoided as in bad taste. Plain Peter Stokes is preferable to the more sounding names of Boulainvilliers, Pourceaugnac, and D'Anguesseau. Such names as these last have a tendency to irritate a student, and create from the outset an unfavorable impression in his mind, while a name like Lamb commends itself at once to the memory by its tenacious associations, and prepossesses the pupil in favor of the author. The odor of a rose may be independent of its name, but there is an indefinable aroma peculiar to an author's name, which is not *une quantité négligeable*.

What could have consoled us, or him, if Tennyson had borne the name of Flipkins or Snoggerton? In the selection of names, it must be admitted that writers of the English language have generally

displayed excellent taste; witness Shakespere, Spenser, and Milton.

A third point which every author should make a matter of conscience is the date of his birth. The desirability of beginning life on the first diurnal tick of the century, or upon a date already grooved in the memory by some other famous man, or in such a year as 333, 444, or 555 is too manifest to need demonstration. The more nearly authors can model the facts of their external life after the following outline, the more acceptable will they be to the children of Mr. Gradgrind:

"Peter Crutch, son of Peter Crutch; born in 1800, native of Duck-Dell; nothing known of his life till he was thirty; no relatives except father and mother (and they of no note); left an orphan at forty, never married, and never was in love; died in 1880, and buried in Duck-Dell."

In spite of his carelessness concerning the date of his birth, we have an amiable feeling toward Chaucer, because he chose the even year 1400 in which to say his adieus to the world. Similarly, one can overlook the mediocrity of Fontenelle, in consideration of the fact that he took the pains to live exactly one hundred years.

A fourth aim of great men should be the regulation of their early mental and moral tendencies. It ought to be unnecessary to remark that a seasonable curbing of reprehensible habits will be advantageous to authors themselves, as well as to posterity, in whose name we plead. It is a well-known fact that too many great men have been precocious children, thus establishing an undesirable precedent for children who come after them. The natural effect of such an example is to discourage those whose talents are not patent

until maturity. Indeed, there may be a reasonable presumption that many of the flowers that blush unseen have finally been discouraged from blushing at all by the precocious and gourdlike attainments of their brothers.

Not less worthy of reprimand is it for an author to have a multiplicity of love-affairs. In this did great Goethe err. Pity the sorrows of the simple-hearted pupil who is told to "look up" the life of this oversusceptible Deutscher, who further complicated the accounts of his life by being born in such a historical city as Frankfort-on-the-Main. Behold the perplexed student preparing for recitation the life of Goethe. He reads of Gretchen, Charitas, Kätchen, Frederike, Lotte, and Maximiliane; bewildered, he turns over leaf after leaf, but to find more like them, bearing the names Lili, Frau von Stein, Christine, and Marianne; so that the re-

sult of the pupil's first reading is likely to be a confused mental composite of Goethe's "ewige weibliche."

Even were he careless of the effect upon himself of such an undignified declension of amor as Goethe's, the coming sage must remember the effect of his example upon posterity, for the X-raying eye of the modern biographer will surely glare upon all the sinuous ways in which his feet may tread, and the cloak of concealment, worn by the sinful celebrity of pro-biographical days, may not avail him.

Nor should the thoughtfulness of great men end with the care of their morals. Physically, they should endeavor to bear some peculiar mark which would easily impress itself upon the memory. A huge nose, bushy eyebrows, or feet of untoward dimensions would serve the purpose, and for such a cause should be borne with resignation by the owner. Many great

men and women have been obliging in this respect, and as a consequence are remembered with a vivid accuracy which does not accompany the recollection of the beautiful ordinary. Thus, Byron, though beautiful, is recognized by his limp; De Quincey, by his deformed stature; and Milton, by his blindness. Michael Angelo, whether for reasons we have set forth or not, indulged in a quarrel which gave him a bent nose for life. Moreover, such marks as these are more significant than at first appears; for a student possessed with a fair gift of construction, knowing the story of Michael's nose, might make several correct inductions concerning his character. Byron's limping, likewise, might be made to account for many of his doleful verses.

If Nature has not particularly emphasized any feature, there are other means by which the obliging genius may en-

hance the interest taken in himself; to wit, by his mode of dress and other habits. Among men, especially, an eccentricity of dress would be more observable than among the fickly-clad sex. The fact that Mr. Kope made a wide red sash do duty for a vest might awaken more interest in that gentleman than the stock announcement that his style was "even dignified and profound." Other methods of branding one's self for posterity's sake will occur to the thoughtful; little habits like taking salt in one's coffee or vinegar in one's tea might serve the end.

The author of prescience should also bear in mind that he may be writing something that will serve as a textbook for generations to come. Facing such a contingency, let him be cautious, for he will be more beloved and cherished by students if he does not indulge in too many reminiscences concerning obsolete

heroes, legendary characters, and rites. In this respect, Horace was sedulously heedless, and his continual references to mythological reprobates, and his own Falernian feats sometimes border on the garrulous, excusable in Horace, but not to be tolerated in his bibulous successors of 1900.

There are several other last mottoes that should be engraved upon the hearts of those wishing to make their lives sublime. Of these the chiefest relate to the gift of continuance, which leads full many an author astray. Novelists are particularly tempted to abuse this gift, as well as saintly clergymen. How many an author has continued writing until his works—like the victories of Pyrrhus—have nearly undone him? In these days, when everybody's cousin writes a book, this caution should be taken most seriously, else will the world clamor for a

literary Malthus to protect it from geniuses of the eighty-volume caliber. Of course, such external interference would be unnecessary if authors themselves would exercise any conscience in the matter. But have they ever done so, as a rule? Do not the majority of them pour out the uttermost dregs of their literary wine-cups—nay, more, have not some of them poured in water and given us the rinsings?

Naturally, a Malthusian statute, like the one under consideration, should be subject to limitations. An author who had enshrined himself in everybody's heart, as several of our American authors have done, might be granted a literary kind of "eminent domain" to overrule statutes and dispossess more unworthy holders of book-shelf space. Such cases could be settled by a popular vote. Most of us, however, would be willing to sit by in silent heroism while nearly all our fa-

vorite authors were being boiled down to five volumes. But, in many instances, the favorite authors have done the boiling down themselves, and that is why they are favorite. As for the authors who are not favorite, we could see the boiling-down process end in entire evaporation, and look on dry-eyed.

In an age possessed with the mania of illustrating the "extreme malleability of an idea," it will doubtless sound revolutionary to suggest that every author—potential or kinetic—should leave unsaid all that he cannot say in ten duodecimo volumes. This will seem especially Quixotic to the author whose literary Mississippi has already run half its length and cannot be dammed, except in a sense too strenuous to be advocated by the present writer.

The truth is, many authors glide into their tenth, twentieth, and fortieth vol-

umes by a kind of acquired velocity, or in obedience to the law of inertia, which, unfortunately, applies to moving bodies as well as to those in a state of rest. Would they but pause and consider the amount and quality of our affection for a sixty-volumed Trollope and a three-volumed Lamb, the inference would surely have some restraining force. But no; we feel that our exhortation has been in vain. The fountain-penned author heeds us as little as the widow about to be wedded again, either on the plea that she made so poor or so good a performance of her first venture. Similarly, the author, who fails or makes a success of his first experiment, finds equally cogent reasons for continuing to write.

Yet hoping upon despair, one would advance another argument to convince the author who is in the "nineteenthly-brethren" stage; how can readers feel

anything but a scattered interest and affection for a literary family of eighty? The very effort to remember so many distracts and blurs one's impressions. The reader is like the man who tried to mourn over the grave of his six wives, buried communistically under one monument; but the bereaved man went away, sorrowing for the sorrow which he could not individualize from its perplexing collectivism.

Lastly, and with increasingly solemn cadence, shall not the coming millions who may feel an affinity for ink be warned that the first essential of authorship is to have something to say? Even a second-rate author might achieve wonders by resolutely damming his mental flow till its volume would give it turning power, instead of trying to run his literary mill-wheels before he has built his dam. How many an author has let his thoughts

trickle away in shallow brooklets, as fast as they came, like the chattering waters of an idle stream, when he might have made golden grindings had he patiently waited for his pond to fill? Many other hints does Nature give upon this text; when milk is allowed to stand a sufficient length of time, there is a cream thick enough to be worth taking off. Sap, too, though very worthless in its native state as it comes from the maple-tree, is a solid and toothsome commodity when it has been boiled down.

Yet, above all, let no author imagine that a prolonged study of rhetorical rules (even as carefully revised as the ones contained in this paper) will enable him to make a literary Niagara out of the contents of an intellectual pint-cup. Probably the world will never know how many disappointments have been due to the advice of stupid and "well-meaning"

textbooks which counsel the student to "model his style" upon some author or authors. From such deep-toned oracles the guileless pupil would infer that a cherry-tree might produce Baldwins, if it were only planted near enough to an apple-tree of that variety. Nevertheless, it is a solemn fact that it never will. As surely as every tree bringeth forth of its own kind, so surely every author—unless he steals—must bring forth his own kind of literary fruit. This is no attempt to belittle the value of good rhetorical training; but when all is said, the fact remains that "*le style c'est l'homme même*," and hence is something which cannot be superinduced.

A good teacher, proper textbooks, and the study of standard authors do for the writer precisely what the gardener does for the plants under his care. The teacher pulls up the weeds, enriches the ground,

and supplies the rain of encouragement in a dry season; yet, hoe as he may, he cannot make a grass-blade blossom like the rose or train a rhododendron to climb a trellis.

"But, how am I to know whether I have genius or not?" asks the inky-fingered novice, struggling to emerge from inglorious muteness.

The signs are many which make this point clear; but one of the surest is this: If you were foreordained to utter the thoughts that breathe and burn, you would never need to rack your brain for a topic upon which to expend your *inspiratio scribendi.* If thoughts do not come to you and beg to be treated, you may safely conclude that they are seeking some more skillful hand. If, on the contrary, ideas attack you with tentacular persistence, you may fairly infer that you should give them a hearing. How to ob-

tain that hearing is another and a very difficult matter. Formerly, clearness of style was thought to ingratiate the author into the favor of the literary public. But in this generation of fads and societies for clubbing out ideas, which can be reached in no other way, one hardly dares advocate beautiful simplicity as a winning hand. The respect and honor once shown clear thinking, as revealed in clear writing, has given way, in certain regions, to a kind of apotheosis of mental mistiness. Given two ideas, precisely equivalent in kind and value, bearing to each other the ratio of one-half to five-hundred thousandths, and the club element in literary circles will utterly ignore the former, while with annotated editions and encyclopedias it proceeds to fill the air with erudite dust which passes for a literary atmosphere.

In spite of all such deterrent thoughts, the honest author—forgetting clubs that

are behind or before—will unswervingly follow the leadings of common sense, which evermore applauds the beauty of clearness and brevity in literary style. For, in spite of illustrious examples—seemingly to the contrary—the profundity of a pool is in no way increased by making its waters so muddy that one cannot see the bottom.

And this farewell maxim, my dutiful literary Laertes, is a first cousin to two others which declare that rhetorical heaviness is not literary weight, nor dullness dignity or depth, or a symptom of either, but quite the contrary, as Landor observed: "Genuine humor and true wit require a sound and capacious mind which is always a grave one." If, then my gentle genius, you should feel a smile stealing in among your fancies, like a sunbeam touching the morning gossamers, do not cruelly bar its entrance, awed by the vision

of some ghoulish critic destitute of a sense of humor; but rather take counsel with your own bosom, or with the admonishing shades of all the Lambs and Lowells whose natural twinklings have lightened the literary firmament and won the gratitude of posterity.

For humor is not the invention of any man, but a quality given him by his Maker, who has allowed a similar iridescence to oversheen the magic ship-of-pearl and the shimmering dewdrop at our feet.

BETWEEN THE LINES.

In spite of advertisements that promise to erase from the face the records of time, sin, and sorrow, Nature's stenographic wrinkle-reports can never be so garbled that they will not give a more or less authentic bulletin of character. When this facial bulletin is written with the indelible pencil of habit, the shorthand notes are sometimes so clear that even a child may decipher them. When none is visible, the absence of lines and wrinkles in the faces of adults is itself an announcement of inner qualities and outward conditions which may be accurately interpreted by the careful observer.

The smooth, unwritten brow and cheek, accompanied by an expression of almost bovine calm, generally belong to the man

or woman who is free from financial anxieties, religious doubts, and dyspepsia. The man or woman, on the other hand, who has a doubtful or intermittent revenue or physical or spiritual indigestion is almost certain to wear a face that is little less than a tragic biographical poster.

A study from life of the origin and development of facial script brings to light the fact that women—especially students and women in business—have more wrinkles and have them earlier than men, probably because of their more sensitive response to pain and pleasure, or perhaps because they can find more things to worry about than their brothers.

Investigations involving the comparison of the wrinkles of men and women are beset with difficulties, for a man, when he has reached the age when wrinkles are permissible, can drape the lower part of his face with guileful whiskers that some-

times conceal two-thirds of Nature's records, which are mercilessly revealed on a woman's face. One almost suspects Nature of abetting the cause of man, and assisting him to draw a veil over the records of the past, so that he may win favor which he might not gain in a whiskerless state. Women, being provided with no such natural resources for softening the truths of the wrinkle, resort to artificial devices, such as veils, powder, paint, and facial massage. And although all these attempts to make Time turn backward in his flight have been the subject of masculine quips and jests as perennial as the mother-in-law joke, who can say to what men might have resorted had they not been provided with the more natural ambush of whiskers from behind which to hurl their verbal javelins?

But such queries have less interest for us than the psychological whys and where-

fores to which the scowl and the wrinkle point. Before approaching these problems, it may be well to map out the territory usually furrowed and tilled by the wrinkle. The five great wrinkle-grants are located at the corners of the eyes, nose, mouth, between the eyebrows, and over the entire expanse of the forehead. In extreme old age, Time further encroaches on the facial reserves by driving his plowshare all over the face. As a result, the firm, smooth cheeks, which poets may have likened to a—one dares not write the name of the now slinguified fruit—are criss-crossed into a diminutive checkerboard, whose charms the bard cheerfully resigns to the prosaic pen of the philosopher. Before him lies the task of explaining how and why wrinkles come, how they may be prevented, and which ones should be allowed to stay.

To the first question, one may give the

same answer that would be given to the query, How does the athlete get his muscle? By practice. One scowl or two will not make a wrinkle, but several hundred a year will develop an unmistakable furrow within half a dozen years, or in even less time, in those sections of the face which respond to the emotions rather than to purely intellectual processes.

In most cases the emotions of fear, hate, anger, and impatience are registered instantaneously in vertical lines between the eyebrows. These marks are almost invariably found in the faces of nervous and hysterical women who are "worried and troubled about many things." It would be safe to conclude that the Scriptural Martha had two or three vertical lines between her eyebrows, and perhaps two more that drew down the corners of her mouth. The same facial memoranda may be seen in the modern descend-

ants of Martha, the women who rush madly toward bargain-counters or street-cars, wearing on their faces an anxious expression ludicrously out of proportion to its occasion.

While lines between the brows generally indicate a petulant disposition, there are several other causes which bring them. Near-sighted people and artists develop these vertical lines by squinting; weak-eyed people, by blinking against the sun or a too strong light. Deaf people, too, who unconsciously wear a strained expression in trying to hear, and, in short, all kinds of people who are trying to solve puzzling problems, fall into the habit of knitting the brows. The vertical wrinkle is also common among physicians, lawyers, authors, artists, and editors.

Longitudinal lines, very frequently found in the faces of clergymen, orators, and poets, are caused by elevating the brows,

a method of noncommittal expression, which stands the preacher in good stead when he is cornered by queries that leave him no escape except in an expression which is a compromise between surprise and disapproval. The longitudinal wrinkle is much less disfiguring than the vertical, and its origin is nearly always intellectual rather than emotional. The foreheads of statesmen and diplomatists furnish numerous illustrations of wrinkles of this variety. Much of the impressiveness of Gladstone's last portraits would be absent without the frontal hieroglyphics slowly and subtly limned by Time and Gladstone.

Perhaps the most interesting of all wrinkle-groups are those located around the regions where humorous dispatches are filed, at the corners of the eyes and the mouth. These are all lines which add to the attractiveness of the face unless

the humor recorded is of the "broad" brand which produces the "low smile," destructive to all delicacy of expression. Even an otherwise plain face, embellished by traces of duplicating dimples, and a few light impressionistic lines at the corners of the eyes, is good to look upon. The wrinkle of humor, at the same time, gives a trustworthy index of character, for

> "The man who can smile
> Is the man that's worth while,"

and the lines that record plentiful smiles in the past are usually a certificate of an intelligent mind and a philosophical disposition, and go far toward answering the question, "Is he happy?" which Cardinal Mazarin used to ask about a man before employing him.

In addition to wrinkles of emotional origin there are a great many without direct moral significance. Illness, old age, and emaciation, which make the skin so

loose that it no longer fits the face, cause it to fall together in folds like a misfit garment. London fogs, however undesirable they may be in some respects, are undoubted preservers of beauty in keeping the skin moist and less susceptible to wrinkles. Still, wrinkles in the disposition will leave their traces even on the fairest face, and for these nothing but ethical training, which substitutes benevolent for malevolent emotions, will permanently suffice.

When one has studied the lines on the faces of women who have been obliged for many years to elbow their way through the business thoroughfares of life, and the facial lines of those who have been spared such a calamity, she will perhaps admit that it is something more than mere hidebound obstinacy and selfish or jealous interest which makes the most thoughtful men protest against the entrance of

women into all kinds of hardening pursuits in which men engage. An instinct, of higher and wiser authority than themselves, speaks through men's protest against one phase of the modern life of women. It is to the everlasting credit of good men—and an extenuating characteristic of bad ones—that they know quite as often as women themselves what feminine qualities should be preserved. Among those qualities are several—notably serenity, gentleness, and courtesy—which belong to what the world calls a lady in the best sense of the word. But these qualities do not, as a rule, thrive in the strenuous atmospheres of business, and little by little the facial lines which registered the presence of such qualities are obliterated, and new and harder lines, more like those in men's faces, are written in their stead. There is, furthermore, a reflex risk that men will be deprived of

some of the finest lines in their faces—lines that are written by a natural instinct to shield and protect women.

The result of all these tendencies is to destroy the pleasing difference between masculine and feminine expression at which Nature aimed, as well as her obvious attempt to perfect certain virtues by the specialism of sex.

From these observations no one should infer that the feminine ideal of the writer is a vapid compound of sweet negations. The fairest of all flowers, in fiber, color, and fragrance, grows on a firm stalk, well-armed with thorns, and the fairest flowers of grace and courtesy blossom from a stalk strongly spiked with protecting virtues. But too often the effect of a business life on women is to scatter the roses and leave behind only the thorny stalk.

A photographic composite of the faces

of fifty "schoolma'am's" from the public schools would greatly illuminate the matter under discussion, especially if they had been teachers for over two decades.

"You haven't acquired the schoolma'am air, and for heaven's sake don't," said a clever supervisor to his young assistant. In the first part of the remark spoke the professional man, in the latter the man who was weighing larger human issues; and the resultant of them both added the compromising caution, "but you will have to find some substitute."

The schoolma'am air leaves its mark in the lines about the mouth and between the brows. But in justice to teachers, it must be conceded that there are some who do find a substitute for the air, and so escape its more baleful brand. There are also many women who develop some of the lines worn by teachers, though they have never taught a day in their lives.

Another interesting phase of the study of wrinkles is found in the marked difference which exists between the facial lines of different races and between different classes of the same race. If one puts side by side a photographic group of the members of the French Academy, and a similar group of forty Academizable Englishmen or Americans, the racial lines may be very easily discerned.

Equally pronounced is the psychical effect of religious experiences and different religious beliefs upon facial lines. The physiognomic penciling of a nun's face, and the almost blank facial document of a vacant-minded girl whose highest delight is gastronomic, also present alluring psychological data. Not less interesting is the comparison of the linear notes on the face of a priest or monk, and those of a Protestant clergyman. In days gone by, when religion was a somewhat grim

and severe dispensation, its influence as a modifier of facial expression was in keeping with the notions entertained about it. The devout burners of witches and damners of unbaptized infants indexed their beliefs in stern hard lines that admirably fitted their visages to texts in shalt-nots, and the result was a face like Cotton Mather's. With latter-day eliminations from theological beliefs came a softening of the lines of the face, and the world has been blessed with faces like those of Phillips Brooks, Edward Everett Hale, and others less known to fame. Who cannot recall some silver-haired grandfather or grandmother whose well-written countenance was a table of beatitudes?

Many such faces, in youth, may have been called "homely," but every year has added to the facial chronicle its tale of love, sorrow, aspiration, strife, heroism, and victory, until the face has un-

dergone transfiguration, silently wrought by the holy processes of the soul. Such beauty of countenance cannot be measured by those whose highest standards are found in the unscored tablets of youth. Trusting to the latter, how many a man has made shipwreck on the great conjugal deep, because there was no guiding chart on the unwritten brow of his too youthful beloved! His choice has been made before the lookout lines of the face were clearly marked, or before he himself was skilled enough to read them, and, lo! what promised to be a fig proved to be a thistle.

The modern tendency to retard the age when men and women "give hostages to fortune" has been much bewailed in certain quarters; but there is a grain of consolation in the thought that every year writes the facial table of contents in more legible letters, so that a matrimonial

venture need not be quite so much of a leap in the dark as in the days of our ancestors, when Lucy, aetat sixteen, wedded Samuel, aged twenty.

Yet even in our more cautious age, one cannot trust too implicitly the records of every face. There is now and then a man or woman who has what is known as a "poker face," which has been rigidly schooled into stoical inflexibility. The muscles, denied their natural response to the thoughts and emotions, no longer give authentic reports, and Nature's design of giving the mind's construction in the face is partially thwarted. There is, moreover, abroad in the land the woman who invokes the arts of dermatology, often succeeding in obliterating, to a considerable extent, the signal lines which might guide a wary suitor. Against all such a mild warning is interpolated, and, while the admonitory mood is still active,

one is tempted to offer the would-be deceivers themselves a bit of counsel. To the possessor of the "poker face" let this little word suffice: A face which at maturity (a date that may be relatively fixed somewhere in the neighborhood of thirty to forty) reveals nothing, is, to speak paradoxically, a revelation either of emptiness or of something hidden.

To the other class of deceivers, who undergo prolonged and painful treatment to erase a wrinkle, one feels like recommending a simple course of ethics. For no dermatologist can give to the countenance the charm which may be written into it by those higher, inner forces that make thought and action beautiful.

To beauty thus acquired the years offer no menace, but rather promise of greater fulfillment, even as the tones of a violin under the hand of a master are mellowed by the sweet vibrations of the passing years.

NATURE'S ECONOMIES.

The Yankee has sometimes been derided for his inventions which combine in a small compass a variety of vulgar conveniences. But Nature herself, in her wondrous devices for making one organ fulfill a score of varied and diverse functions, far outdistances any of man's contrivances.

Consider for a moment what a jack-of-all-trades is the mouth, the conveyor of eatables, drinkables, the purveyor of eloquence, music, laughter, smiles, scorn, pouts, and kisses, not to mention any of its minor and acquired offices, as a pencil-holder for the clerk and a needle- and pin-receiver for the dressmaker. If so to consider is not to consider too curiously, shall we not marvel at the mechanism of an organ so constructed that it can

without incongruity or loss of dignity be a receiver of the items of a menu or the wordless volapük of lovers? For so gently does memory efface for us the fact that the same mouth which is now breathing forth words of love and tenderness, but three hours since, perchance, was occupied—not less zealously—with the prosaic mastication of lobster or beef.

Contemplating such ill-mated verities, one has almost a flitting wish that Nature could have foregone for once her usual economies in fashioning the chief weapon in Cupid's armory and guarded its use with some exclusions. But on the contrary, the mouth, more than most organs, is a great factotum; and the lips, only nominally and temporarily, Cupid's bow, being quite otherwise engaged the larger share of the time in all manner of miscellaneous occupations, from the deliverance of eloquence to whistling or smoke.

Examples of the same economy of function may be found throughout the human body, each organ having, in addition to its purely physical office, a varying number of intellectual, moral, and hybrid functions. The nose, in its most vital physical function, is the air canal to the lungs, but in its higher vocations, as a discerner of odors pleasant and unpleasant—and the world of associations with which they are invested—it is a most proficient tutor of the mind and soul, the translator of the fragrant messages of the flower-world, the breath of the ocean, and the dank and poisonous vapors of regions polluted and deathly. The same nose that quietly and continually feeds the lungs with oxygen, warns us when gas is escaping, instructs us—ere she has spoken—concerning the grade of our fellow-traveler who is redolent with musk, or brings up, with a passing whiff from a florist's window, a world

of associations that vibrate through the soul like the strains the wind plays upon the sensitive strings of an Aeolian harp.

In another of its artificial callings, the nose, as a support for eyeglasses or spectacles, holds an office so important to those with defective eyesight that it looks as if Nature had foreseen the contingency of failing sight and covenanted with the nose to be conveniently near and ready to receive the artificial aids which man would be sure to contrive. Again, the nose, as a great physiognomic elevation in the facial lowlands, has a passively artistic function similar to that of a mountain-peak, which relieves the monotony of dead levels. A face without a nose would be a face that one would scarcely care to contemplate.

And lastly, in its various sizes and contours, the nose is a valuable index of disposition and character.

But of all Nature's organic illustrations of the economy of versatility, the most marvelous is undoubtedly the hand. For who could enumerate the myriad tasks which it performs, from the servile toil of the street-cleaner to the delicate chiseling of the sculptor, or the silent eloquence of its own mechanism, hinting questions to which no sage has yet found an answer? Without the hand, where were all the worlds of literature, music, art, or practical Christianity? Studying the infinite possibilities that grow out of its flexibility, is it not reasonable to conceive that the Intelligence which created an instrument of such miraculous adjustability, strength, and suppleness as the hand foresaw its ecstatic movements over the strings of a violin or a piano, or the finger-fine obedience to the vast range of emotions that have been transcribed in painting, sculpture, and architecture?

One can scarcely avoid the surmise, moreover, that in the design of the hand there was not only a divine prevision of all the things which it has thus far accomplished, but a still more wonderful world of results to be achieved by the increasingly dexterous hands of generations yet to be.

In spite of all its duties as a body-servant, the hand never loses the dignity which attaches to its esthetic or moral functions (as a peacemaker or an instrument of vengeance). For what voluminous expressions of friendship, affection, or forgiveness may be condensed in a cordial hand-clasp, and what defiance in a clenched fist or warning finger!

But to review all that the hand can accomplish would be to review most of the products of the material world, and one casts about for some other organ not so overloaded with offices—the heart, per-

haps. But, no; on second thoughts, even the heart, in its secret chamber—tirelessly beating off our life-ticks, is not exempt from the multifarious rôles imposed by Nature. And, alas! the pity of it! For if it could pump blood alone, how few cases of heart-failure would be on record! But in addition to this perpetual physical employment, loving, hating, joying, grieving, fearing, pitying, envying, and desponding are on its list of moral and immoral functions. Rare, indeed, is the heart that does not let some of these occupations interfere with the proper performance of its first simple duty as a blood-pump. In a harsh world, where one must draw his breath in pain, the man or woman past thirty whose heart still pulls a steady, full stroke has either a very strong physical organ and somewhat obtuse sensibilities, or he is a philosopher who has schooled himself and instructed his feel-

ings to be "out" when painful calls are made upon them.

But for many this schooling itself taxes the strength of the heart one would keep unimpaired. The soundest heart, physically considered, will be found in the man or woman who is "dead to rapture or despair," in the man who never reads a book, and in the woman who can sleep nine hours without a break.

When one faces the fact that every increase of refinement and delicacy of feeling means a corresponding increase in the capacity for suffering, it looks as though the heart would become in our great-great-grandchildren a deranged organ, ticking faintly and wearily like far-off echoes of the robust throbs of a less refined and civilized era. But with this doleful speculation comes another more comforting. Modern psychology, with its keenly introspective eye, has already ex-

plored the regions of the emotions and their effects, so that we may expect, in due time, scientists and inventors who will discover for every involuntary emotion that pulls the heart-strings another voluntary one with a counter-pull, so that one may learn to love, hate, fear, and pity so scientifically that the heart will not suffer in consequence, but keep its perfect rhythm without the loss of one small fraction of a beat.

May these things be, and yet we venture to hope that they may be without eliminating the human element in pity and reducing it to a mechanical impulse as cold and impersonal as a charity soup-ticket.

WHAT'S IN AN EYE.

PHYSIOLOGICALLY considered, the eye is a small magical ball, filled with aqueous and vitreous humors, furnished with a crystalline lens, a perforated curtain for regulating the admission of light, and three protecting coats. By means of this mysterious outfit, the eye delivers to man the countless messages of earth and sky, from the sublimest utterance of mountain and star to the most trivial commonplace that speaks from a button.

But in addition to its capacity as a receiver and reporter of impressions from without, the eye is no less marvelous as a reporter of the world within—being, indeed, a directory of all the great mental and moral thoroughfares, crooked streets and dark alleys, in the unbounded

city of man. All visible wonders of the human mechanism find their culmination in the eye. For here matter almost seems to lose its stolid thingness and reach the fine dividing line, the delicate transition point, where it half merges into spirit. Over the sensitive films and fibers of the eye the soul transmits messages too delicate for the cruder and less adequate resources of speech. All that the quivering, vibrating strings of the violin can tell the ear, the eye tells another eye with its vast chromatic scale of changing lights and shadows, twinkling dilations and contractions. Where the tongue is slow and does its bidding but falteringly, the eye, with one swift glance, amends the stammering speech or atones for its omission altogether. With the eye man discerns and is discerned.

As a discoverer and discloser of secrets, the eye occupies the position of privy-

council to the understanding, or foster-parent to the eye of faith and the "inner eye, which is the bliss of solitude." The outer eye reads the lines to the inner eye, which reads between them. Such is the double vision of the wise man, whose eyes—on the authority of Solomon—"are in his head."

Confronting the world, the eye is a wary scout; in the lover it is both plaintiff and advocate; in the maiden it is the "watchful sentinel, who charms the more its glance forbids"; in the jester it is the herald of wit; and in the mourner, the mute translator of grief.

The eye is the only linguist whose volapük may hope to survive the change and decay that await all other languages. But the eye is also a polyglot, since by means of its diversity of coloring it may be said to have four distinct languages—Black, Brown, Blue, and Gray—besides a

great many more or less picturesque dialects in hazel-green, mottled gray, and other compounds of the colors already mentioned.

The language of the black eye is generally less intelligible than that of the brown or blue, and bespeaks a nature less open and sympathetic. As a matter of fact, black eyes are very rare, and many that pass for black are, in reality, only very dark brown that at times look black when the pupils are much dilated. The language of the brown eye in all its shades is better known. As a rule, very good qualities of mind and heart go with brown eyes, though one must make an exception in the case of protruding, beady eyes (destitute of mirth), which belong to people of a very prosaic type of mind. But one may almost always count upon the humor and open-mindedness of a man or woman with soft brown eyes,

capable of a vast range of expression, from the merriest of innocent twinkles to the deep, shadowy reflections of gloom and despair. The large brown eye is *par excellence* the repository of passion and melancholy. No eye of any other color seems capable of expressing such fathomless grief, anger, and reproach, or, under the stimulus of an evil impulse, such a suggestion of diabolic obsession, as a dark brown eye. A blue-eyed man may be as sad or bad as another one with dark brown eyes; but sadness or badness, written in the blue of ocular rhetoric, loses visible intensity, possibly for the same reason that the devil—albeit the same dread potentate—would be less diabolically impressive and expressive if dressed in blue instead of his customary suit of inky black. Using a brown pigment, Nature frequently tricks the undiscerning, nevertheless, by underscoring

—with the effect of italics—various expressions of the eye, but by no means guaranteeing a superior intensity of the emotion back of the expression. "My cousin Phil labors at a great disadvantage," said a bright young woman, "because his eyes are not brown. In the medical profession they would double his practice, for he wouldn't need to be sympathetic; he could just roll his eyes effectively, now and then, and he would be adjudged the very milk of mercy and tenderness, which he really is, though his eyes conceal rather than proclaim the fact."

A common variety of the brown eye is of a light butternut color and almost as devoid of expression as a bright shining button, furnishing, indeed, a truthful index to the blank pages behind it. Such an eye is chiefly a physical organ useful in directing the way to dinner.

Nearly the same characteristics that accompany the shining-button eye are found in men and women with crockery-blue eyes, that keep an unvarying and monotonous blueness and brightness, unresponsive to any psychical influences that often give beauty or interest to eyes dull in color and faulty in shape.

In its rarest and finest shades, the blue eye generally accompanies delicacy of taste and an affectionate disposition, though exceptions have been known where eyes like the blue dreams of Cloud-land have belonged to young women with dispositions closely related to "Shere Khan's," of Jungle fame. Perhaps the best eyes of this color are the deep, burning blue, the violet blue, and a very pale blue which seems to reflect ethereal lights that illumine the whole face. Something, possibly, in its color kinship to the sky, and the whole world of blue-eyed blossoms, or in

its darker shades, its power as a miniature reminder of the deeps of the ocean, gives the blue eye a language as different from that of the brown or black as the effects which an artist produces by the use of blue and brown pigments. In Emerson's "Ode to Eva" one finds a dainty illustration of the skyward suggestions of the blue eye:

> "O fair and stately maid, whose eyes
> Were kindled in the upper skies."

But comparatively few poets have celebrated the charms of the gray-blue eye, which has guided so many a conqueror to victory and fame. With eyes of this hue one finds almost invariably a clear, logical brain, a temper of considerable volcanic activity, and an imperious disposition.

When all has been said—which has not been attempted here—concerning the significance of the color of the eye, one has

only begun to consider the catalogue of the rhetorical possibilities of the eye. A large percentage, indeed, of descriptive adjectives applied to eyes refer wholly to their expression, irrespective of their color. Cold, cruel, mocking, furtive, restless, secretive, inscrutable, uncertain, dead, dull, dreamy, slumbrous, honest, piercing, snapping, sparkling, twinkling, merry, sad, melancholy, bird-like, fish-like, hawk-like, gazelle-like, cow-like, and dog-like are all adjectives vastly more definite and significant than those which relate to color merely. To say that an eye is black or brown gives about the same amount of information that is conveyed by the statement that a story is written in English. But when it is said that a woman has a snaky eye, the description is clear and calls up an accurate vision of a small, shiny eye, black or very dark brown in color, in whose darting, side-

wise glance there is often a semblance of red or green fire. Again in the adjective fishy or fish-like, applied to eyes, one sees an instantaneous picture of a round, protruding eye, usually of a cold, grayish color, that belongs to an untrustworthy character, a man of disorderly mind, abnormal instincts, and a crawly kind of magnetism.

The study of the transfixing, magnetic, or psychic eye, as it is sometimes called, takes one into the crepuscular realm of morbid psychology, where things not dreamed of in the philosophy of the skeptical are possible. For base or noble ends the transfixing eye is a powerful psychical weapon. When a good man or woman has such an eye, he can send from it one penetrating, discomfiting glance, beneath which the dishonest and knavish man will wince and cringe like a whipped cur, while all that is open and upright in an-

other man is challenged to come forth and defy the deepest scrutiny.

To meet daily the probing of a fearless, honest eye is a moral discipline and stimulus whose value the educational world may some time take into account more than it now does. Henry Drummond's eyes possessed the strong psychic quality under consideration. "His eye," writes Dr. Watson, "was not bold or fierce, . . . but it had a power and hold which were little else than irresistible and almost supernatural. When you talked with Drummond, he did not look at you and out of the window alternately, as is the usual manner; he never moved his eyes, and gradually their penetrating gaze seemed to reach and encompass your soul. It was as Plato imagined it would be in the judgment: one soul was in contact with another—nothing between. No man could be double or base or mean or impure before that eye."

A lower order of the psychic eye is common among hypnotists who do not exert their power for strictly moral ends. The worst type of the psychic eye is popularly known as the "evil eye," much of whose power is apocryphally magnified by the superstitious. Still there can be little doubt that evil people have evil eyes. One may scarcely go through the voyage of life without encountering such eyes, from whose glances any decent man or woman naturally shrinks as from a pestilential breath. For the life he has lived is epitomized in the expression of a man's eye. And most marvelous it is, when one stops to think about it, that on a small space which may be covered with a penny, can be written the passing and permanent records of a man's soul. Besides the registration in the eye of the transient moods of love, hate, anger, fear, envy, jealousy, mirth, or melan-

choly, there is the composite effect of all these emotions, that gives the eye its predominant expression. Not a high or holy impulse comes to man, or a base, unworthy motive, that is not subtly reflected in the magical mirror of the eye.

Out of the memories of the past comes one of a face made luminous by eyes whose rapt expression told a plain tale. Their owner was a lonely cripple who had learned to pray. A light that comes from no other source than prayer lit up her eyes and gave them a beauty which the painters of saints have so often vainly striven to catch. In painful contrast to this face, memory holds another, whose eyes were of the same color and shape as those of the little cripple; but as a child the latter had been reared in a notably pernicious social circle, whose pettiness, frivolity, and deceit gradually left their damaging increments in her

eyes. From such painful records one turns with a sense of relief to the wholesome admonitions which may be read in the honest eyes of dumb animals, that have nothing to hide. The child sets out in life with eyes as free from reflections of deceit or duplicity as are the eyes of a gazelle or a spaniel:

> "There is no truth in faces save in children.
> They laugh and weep from Nature's keys."

The spaniel and gazelle always keep the same clear eye, but how is it with the child? Where is that fine limpidity through which one once could look into the very heaven of innocence? Any mother who has made a collection of photographs of her child, taken yearly or more frequently, may place them side by side in chronological order, and trace the effects—if she has the courage—of the gradual alloying which life works in the once unclouded light of childish eyes. With every

passing month, something goes almost imperceptibly from the eyes, and something else as imperceptibly takes its place; and in the difference between these continual gains and losses is recorded the mental and moral ascent or descent of the child.

Some men and women manage to retain in their eyes, through all the disillusionizing experiences of life, a steady beam of the same clear ray that dawned in cradlehood. In the average man and woman of the world, however, there is but a faint flicker of this primitive light, which must be vestal-trimmed and guarded to keep it from being extinguished. In the eyes of an elderly hermit, with whom the writer once had the pleasure of a conversation, the unquenched lights of childish honesty were distinctly visible. Pondering over the cause of this phenomenon, it became clear that in the hermit's

long and almost exclusive association with nature, his dog, and cat, he had but little more opportunity or occasion for any dissimulation in word or expression than his dog, and, in consequence, his eyes were as honest as those of his four-footed colleagues.

From this deduction it was a safe and easy step to another; namely, that the influence of a good dog or cat might be more salutary to a man in some ways than promiscuous association with those of his own kind. Looking into the frank eyes of his dog, a man rises to the dog's level of honesty and meets the animal's glance with one as honest as his own.

It would be comforting to know that a day will come when the glances of men and women will be as honest as those of the lower animals. But at present the "heavenly rhetoric of the eye" is often equivocal, and Nature herself has a hand

in creating the ambiguity; for she sometimes gives a saintlike face and large soulful eyes to a young woman utterly devoid of sensibility and appreciation of the higher issues of life; while to another young woman, with a luminous soul, she will give achromatic eyes of the most nondescript character. Hence it comes to pass that

> "Those eyes—the break of day,
> Lights that do mislead the morn,"

do not stop with that innocent offense. These cases, however, are exceptions, which always occur to bring to naught the wisdom of fools and to establish the errancy of the wise.

THE DEVIL'S FANCY-WORK.

It is an unpleasant fact that lies have an unquestionably ancient origin, coming in, indeed, with the adoption of clothes, and being themselves a kind of extemporized garment to cover the nakedness of the soul detected in sin.

Let memory call the roll of Scriptual celebrities, and echoing down the ages come the lies of Rachel, Jacob, Sarah, Abraham, Samson, Saul, David, and many others, till we come to Ananias and Sapphira, who were pre-eminently unfortunate in being allowed to appear on the Biblical stage in only one ignominious scene.

The opinion seems to be current that one race differeth from another in the ability to speak the truth. In ancient times the Cretans were badly eminent in

prevaricating accomplishments. According to the Apostle Paul, Epimenides declared the Cretans were always liars; but, as Epimenides himself was a Cretan, we are not sure of our evidence. The Turks, on the other hand, are obliged to use the circumlocution, "You tell that which is not," so rare is the practice of lying among them. This evidence, again, being circumstantial, may be ruled out; yet the same kind of evidence makes one wonder if it is not true that races, whose languages have undergone so much for euphony's sake (witness the Greek, Italian, French, and Spanish), have not a greater tendency to syncopate and elide cacophonous verities than have the firm Teutonic chewers of consonants. This may be only a fancy, but it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that a people whose ears are so fastidious in matters of euphony should attempt to soften the some-

times rugged aspirates of truth. Be that as it may, we see the less radical effects of this tendency in the euphemisms which these races employ. Even a man of such reputed integrity as Solon called his system of lightening debts by lightening coins a "Seisachtheia," or disincumbrance; so it should occasion no surprise that the common Athenians spoke of tributes as "customs," jails as "chambers," and garrisons as "guards."

Tacitus complains of a similar practice of using misleading speech among the Romans. "They make a desert and call it peace," is his statement of the matter—an evasive tournure which finds many parallels in the crafty vocabulary which we have constructed since our "occupation" of the Philippine Islands. In future years some philologist or moralist will find a rich field in the study of the rhetorical masks manufactured by impe-

rialism. Witness a partial list of our achievements in this line:

Imperialism, Expansion, Absorption, Pacification, Benevolent Assimilation, Annexation, Colonization, Paternalism, Extension of Territory, Extending the Benefits of Civilization, Industrial Supremacy, Dominance of the Anglo-Saxon Race, Providential Leading, Exploitation of the Islands of the Pacific, Finding a New Field for American Capital, Oriental Development, Quelling the Insurrection, Development of the Islands, Becoming a World-Power, Preparing the Filipinos for Self-Government, Plain Duty, Hand of Destiny, Finger of Fate, Spreading the Gospel, Letting the Flag Stay Put, Supporting the Administration.

Let the reader test each of these sounding polysyllables, first by his ear and then by his moral sense and the sober unadorned facts of the case. To the

ear, *expansion* and *absorption* sound like pretty pastimes, as innocuous as the blowing of soap-bubbles. In reality, they cover a stupendous crime—the slaughter of uncounted thousands of innocent men and children, and the devastation of their country and homes.

In the same manner, Caesar delicately submerged unpleasant details of his campaigns, describing the condition of the peoples whose homes had been sacked and burned, with soft brevity, "pax pacata." Roman veracity is further illuminated by several sinister proverbs, like: "*Quid Romae faciam? mentire nescio*," and "*Veritas odium parit.*"

The Romans, however, could hardly bear away the palm from the Greeks in mendacious exploits. The reputation of the much-bepraised hero, the "godlike Ulysses," was founded largely on his skill in issuing negotiable lies. This habit was so

much a second nature with him that even when he had at last reached his native land, and might have reined in his imagination for a rest, he regales his old friend, Pallas, with a tale worthy of Baron Munchausen. Even the blue-eyed goddess, familiar as she is with his proficiency in this line, is astounded, and revealing herself to him declares:

> "Full shrewd were he a master of deceit
> Who should surpass thee in the ways of craft,
> Even though he were a god; thou, unabashed
> And prompt with shifts and measureless in wiles,
> Thou canst not even in thine own land refrain
> From artful figments and misleading words
> As thou hast practiced from thy birth."

Not a hint of reproof, however, comes from Minerva. On the contrary, she touches her favorite caressingly, and seems to take great pride in his genius for extemporizing. The Greek gods, indeed, could lay claim to no moral superiority, save in the ingenuity with which they out-Greeked their creators in misleading

men and hoodwinking each other. Juno, especially, was a liar of infinite resource, hoaxing her omnipotent consort so often that one comes to the conclusion that, despite his omniscience, Zeus was a henpecked divinity of the most gullible order.

Among modern nations, the English and Germans have enviable reputations for sincerity. What the standing of Americans is in this regard is a very open question. The untrammeled imagination of the Westerner, keeping pace with the growth of his country, has given a somewhat florid cast to the tales which originate in his vicinity. But, as most of these stories are told with no intent to deceive, they can hardly be called lies. Alongside of such habits of romance, moreover, one finds instances of beautifully laconic candor, like the explanation, "Busted," published in the last issue of a Western newspaper, and the announce-

ment by a Western clergyman that "incompatibility" was the cause of his resignation.

In every country there are local variations from the national type; but, until the contrary is proved, one may accept as a provisional solace the hypothesis that there are as many truthful Americans—in proportion to their number—as Britons. A nation, whose best-loved leaders have been men like Honest Abe and the hero of the hachet, shows an appreciation and respect for sincerity which argue like qualities among its citizens. In the testimony of her literary representatives on this subject, America has been most happy. In nearly every one of Emerson's essays one finds some note in the following key: "I look upon the simple and childish virtues of veracity and honesty as the root of all that is sublime in character." Equally strong

and more bizarre in his championship of truthfulness was Thoreau, who would frankly say to the bore who attemped to waste his time, "I don't know, perhaps a minute would do for both of us."

Of Hawthorne one of his biographers wrote: "The traits of his character were stern probity and truthfulness." This one might read between the lines of the concluding warning of "The Scarlet Letter": "Be true, be true, be true. Show freely to the world, if not your worst, yet some trait whereby the worst may be inferred." A large share of Lowell's work, too, was a persistent warfare against shams in religion and politics, and the same is true of the writings of Holmes and Whittier.

In making a relative estimate of the honesty of Americans and Britons, one must take into account the heterogeneous character of our population. At the present hour there are several very favorable

signs of a growing regard for truth among us. One is the increasing tendency of both pulpit and pews to satisfy the dictates of conscience, even at the expense of persecution, "unconvinced by ax or gibbet that all virtue is the past's."

Returning to the consideration of German veracity, we see in their systems of education and in their manufactures very trustworthy signs of the genuineness of their character. A nation that so steadfastly insists on gründlich work, must possess a great deal of that gründlich quality—sincerity. What is called their "Freethinking" is but another token of their determination to confess belief only in what they really do believe.

It is not the main purpose of this paper, however, to prove the ethical superiority of one nation over another, even were such a feat possible, but rather to show the cancerous effect of lying on character.

Every lie told puts another mortgage one one's future ability to tell the truth. The so-called white lie is the mother of gray lies, and finally the grandmother of black ones. How many scores of such lies as this are heard:

"Sue, the braid is ripped off your dress."

Sue (who is shiftless, but does not wish to be thought so): "Is it? Dear me! When could I have done it?"

Poor Sue, why didn't you do the heroic thing and face Jemima Busybody with the frank confession: "Yes, I know it; it has been so for more than a week, but most of my mending is done by the fools' calendar"?

Again, some dear, procrastinating damsel allows her letter to contain that threadbare fib, "I haven't had time"—a musty phrase, long ago condemned by Marcus Aurelius, who said he learned from Alexander the Platonic to avoid its use.

And yet, once more, how many an opportunity for veracious hardihood is foolishly thrown away by the man who fences with another who has asked him if he has read a certain book. O fearful-hearted man! If you have not read the book, still look your tormentor unflinchingly in the eye and calmly avow the fact, e'en though the book in question may be in the four thousandth whirl of a cyclone edition.

By daily practice in telling the truth about little matters, the habit will become so fixed that when one is confronted with a great temptation to lie he will yet, by acquired moral velocity, move along the right path.

It is chiefly among society women that the white lie flourishes in all its tropical luxuriance. There it is that lying is done "in an ornamental way, finished, evasive, and neat." Howells is never tired of turn-

ing the light, or phonograph, on this species of insincerity. In his farces "The Unexpected Guests" and "The Mouse-Trap" he makes some very keen and merited criticisms on this point. He seems to hold the opinion, and I think justly, that women are much more given to supererogatory fibbing than are men. In "April Hopes" his hero asks if "the most circuitous kind of a fellow would not be pretty direct compared with the straightforwardest kind of a girl?" But Howells does not fail to expose the same failing when he finds it in men.

It must be admitted that there are occasions when the temptation to dull the edge of too-cutting truths is well-nigh irresistible. There are critical moments when kind consideration for the feelings of another plead for mercy at the expense of sincerity, and, unlike the former quality, truth is strained. On the record of such lies it

is to be hoped that the recording angel will drop the traditional tear—if he still has any in stock. In the following case does one not feel a throb of sympathy and a hope of painless expiation for the clever culprit?

The Reverend Clericus has been waiting half an hour to speak with his wife, who is having a call from Mrs. Longwind. Hearing the front door close, he supposes the visitor is gone.

The Reverend C. (calling from his study): "Well, has that old bore gone at last?"

Mrs. Clericus (from the drawing-room, where Mrs. Longwind still sits): "Oh, yes, my dear; she went an hour ago; but our dear Mrs. Longwind is here. I know you will want to come in and see her."

This case is so full of extenuating circumstances that a final decision must be left to casuists. In the first place, Mrs. Clericus had but a second in which to bal-

ance the claims of candor and courtesy, and while she is adjusting this delicate scale she sees in a mental flashlight the grieved and indignant Mrs. Longwind, unpleasant gossip, a compulsory resignation, and perhaps a nomadic condition confronting her family. Given a woman with her mental velocity, with the same high pressure of circumstances, and one can see how free moral agency can be reduced to a minimum so low that it shades into fatalism. The aberration of Mrs. Clericus furnishes a good illustration of the unpremeditated lie which differs world-wide from the lie prepense.

Another very common kind of lie might be called the *ex poste facto* fib. Some one asks Mrs. Shortmemory why she did or did not do some particular thing. Instead of stating the real reason, Mrs. S. offers a plausible one, which at that moment occurs to her as the most acceptable

to her questioner. Within a few minutes she gives an object-lesson on an old adage about a rope, by offering three or four other reasons which invalidate the first one given. People, with reasons "plenty as blackberries," should emulate Falstaff, and not give any.

The question "why" is a particularly difficult one to answer truthfully, even for honest men. While their answers may not be lies, according to the dictionary, they will often be far from the truth; for though a very ignorant man can keep from lying, it sometimes requires more than honesty to speak the truth. An interesting illustration of this fact was furnished by a series of articles, written some time ago by prominent clergymen in answer to the query, "Why I am what I am." I may be mistaken, but I think that only four out of the fourteen who answered the question gave the real rea-

sons for their denominational views, most of them altogether ignoring the fact that they would have been as good Brahmins as they are Christians, had they been born near enough to the Ganges. Among those who weighed their reasons most carefully was Dr. Lyman Abbott, whose answer was, "Probably chiefly because I am an American—I was born and bred so."

A similar response was made by the Rev. John White Chadwick: "As a matter of fact, it is very possible that I am a Unitarian because I was to the Unitarian manner born and reared." The Rev. G. F. Krotel makes the same admission, and Dr. Gustav Gottheil put the matter in his usual logical style: "I am what I am because I was born so. Had my parents been Christians, I might have despised the Jews, while now I gladly own myself one of them. We receive our

religion, like out speech and manners, by education, of which it has been truly said that it begins even before our birth. We speak, indeed, as though we had been to a bazar where all the religions of the world are on exhibition, and, after testing all, had picked out the best. We have no right to put on such airs."

Another kind of false speaking is very prevalent among literary critics, who feel an enthusiasm which nothing but fearful superlatives will allay. In an article on Walt Whitman, in a well-known magazine, I found this sentence: "Walt Whitman is of imagination all compact; no one ever lived who was more so." Comment is unnecessary; it seems that the writer of that criticism knew everybody that ever lived.

We find even so delightful an essayist as Whipple falling into the same error. Speaking of Shakespere's plays on the

stage, Emerson said, "One golden word leaps out immortal from all this painted pedantry, and secretly torments us with invitations to its own inaccessable homes." One may like the phraseology, until Whipple calls it "the best prose sentence written on this side of the Atlantic." And again we sigh when Hudson declares, of Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty," that "no higher strain of moral inspiration has been breathed on earth since the days of the Apostles," which, of course, justifies one in concluding that, of all the strains breathed on earth since the days of the Apostles, not one escaped Mr. Hudson's ear. Even if one could believe this impossibility, it comes hard to believe that any one is the possessor of a spiritual hypsometer which is so infallible.

The man addicted to the superlative habit should paste upon his inkstand the aphorism of Manley Pike: "No un-

qualified assertion is ever wholly true, not even this one."

Thus, in every walk and calling of life, falsehood lies in wait to trip up the truth. The minister, in his trying calling of all things to all men, is peculiarly tempted to use reversible speech. Nietzsche, indeed, declares that what a theologian feels is true must be false. The doctor, as a therapeutic means, speaks that which is not. The starving lawyer argues innocence for a client whom he knows to be guilty. The politician——

The critic sacrifices facts to rhetorical finish, and the teacher evades a question by telling his pupil to "look it up for the next time," thereby thinking to seem wiser than he is, when a frank "I don't know" would raise him infinitely higher in the estimation of sensible pupils than his pretended omniscience. The pupil cribs his cuffs and book-margins, the am-

phibious boy avoids punishment by a lie, and the child who has not yet learned to talk uses its infant crescendo to deceive a doting mamma.

Nor does deception end with man and the world of his making. We find that dear old Nature herself is a Circe full of tricksy wiles. With an *ignis fatuus* she lures the belated traveler into bogs and swamps, or hangs a mirage of delight before him in the trackless desert. She makes a poisonous imitation of the mushroom and the ivy, and tricks the ingenuous gold-hunter with iron pyrites.

On the other hand, Nature shows her disapproval of dishonesty in a thousand ways. While the liar's attention is given to his words, every deviation from the truth Nature debits on his face in her own symbols and abbreviations which cannot escape the skillful observer. Involuntary facial expressions always speak

the truth, and voluntary ones always lie. Mirrored in the eye is the conflict between voluntary and involuntary expressions, and the same story is told by the oblique and roving glance, drooping lids, and twitching muscles about the corners of the mouth. With all these signs Nature makes a detective sketch and posts it, like an April-fool placard, on the culprit's own person.

With every added offense, she draws the lines of her sketch a little deeper, until the liar stands revealed, and may be read and known of all men.

A wonderful picture of the facial effect of lying is given in one of James's stories, "The Liar," and Caravaggio brings out the same idea in his grewsome painting, "The False Players."

In conclusion, one naturally asks, what can be done about it?

The first opportunity lies with parents

and teachers. Undoubtedly, some children are born with a stronger penchant toward veracity than are others. Nevertheless, with proper training, most children can be taught to speak the truth, for lying is subject to the general laws of habit, and "use can almost change the stamp of Nature, and either curb the devil or throw him out with wondrous potency."

If parents could implant in the minds of their children a loathing for the cowardice which almost always inspires a lie, a large part of the world's crimes would be prevented, and the positive gains in righteousness would be increased beyond the limits of ethical computation. But all attempts to incite such a loathing by precept alone are worse than useless. Sooner or later every intelligent child measures the discrepancies between the words and acts of his parents, and on those discrepancies, as a rule, he will model his own.

THE LIFTING OF VEILS IN LITERATURE.

In the elder and comparatively guileless days of art, ere the beginning of the bold and morbid dynasty from Zola to Pierre Louys, literature was divided into two great classes—the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. But for our own sophisticated generation there needs to be a new and safer classification: literature that can be read on the front veranda, and literature which cannot be read there and should not be read anywhere; or "books that no girl would like to see her mother reading," and books that may safely be put in the hands of our grandfathers.

If we may trust the reviewers and a few sample pages of books we are content

to read by proxy, too much of modern book-craft is a dire fulfillment of the prophecy, "For there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid that shall not be known; . . . and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops." In a word, our own time—when we are in danger of knowing too much and knowing it too soon—is a reaction from the age when our ancestors knew too little and knew it too late. Instead of the old line, "We are the same that our fathers have been," veracity compels the substitution of some equivalent of the German proverb, "*Das Ei ist klüger als die Henne*," or the minnow of to-day is wiser than the whale of yester-year. In fine, we should no longer sigh "*si la jeunesse savait*," but *si la jeunesse ne savait pas*.

Not only the imaginations of romancers, but the genuine biographies and con-

fessions of men and women, tend to make us prematurely familiar with ourselves, and more especially with our unsaintly possibilities. The buds may well be discouraged from putting forth their petals if the vision of the preying worm and the sere and yellow leaf—ending in decay and dust—is kept too much in evidence. For other reasons, there is much cause for regret in all this, since a few experiences and the charm of their discovery belong exclusively to one's own biography. How ruthless, then, the pen of the novelist who gives a three-page description of a kiss—thereby robbing some reader of his personal right of discovery, and profaning the sacred poetry of life into the roadside prose of a circus-poster. This may seem but a minor offense of the rough-handed realist. But, after all, is it so minor? Life and love will cease to come fresh and beautiful to youth if every sen-

sation and emotion is to be analyzed and placarded. The dreary day may dawn when the too well-read man may sigh for the early disadvantages of Mowgli or the blissful ignorance of the illiterate peasant whose own romance is a fresh and divine revelation to be held forever sacred in the privacy of his own heart.

Unless tradition and most of our instincts are at fault, there are a few facts which belong to the realm of twilight and darkness. Nor can these facts be dragged into the garish light of day without violating the laws of literary chiaroscuro, not to mention ethical considerations still more vital. Not the least effective part of any theatrical performance is the restful moment when the curtain falls. There are books, however, that scarcely allow their readers any such freedom and rest. The curtain no sooner falls on the stage than another rises on the actors' dressing-room.

Unfortunately, authors and publishers have discovered that the novel in which there are no reserves is the novel which sells, though it is only fair to acknowledge that the best known publishers of our country have persisted in issuing only uncompromisingly decent books. But there is always some publisher who has his price, and his financial returns tempt other publishers. So it comes to pass that there is a steady increase in the production of questionable books, and with the publication of every such work arise its defenders, ready to crush all objections and objectors with stony tables from their own little Sinai of art. Meantime, the infectious volume goes its way—not into the hands of the discriminating few who are oblivious of everything in it save its art—but chiefly into the hands of the inquisitive many, who read it for entirely different reasons, not more esthetic

and transcendental, we may justly infer, than the motives which inspire the readers of yellow journals.

Not even the most belligerent devotee of the famous Italian, "who speaks so loud one hears him well only at a distance," would maintain that it was a sudden and overwhelming appreciation of that author's art which accounted for the enormous sales of his best known novel. But granting the existence in that book of some very rarefied and sublimated form of art—comprehensible only to a highly evolved order of intellect—is not the moral risk incurred by the great mass of undiscerning readers a large price to pay for the hypothetical benefit accruing to the highly cultured few? Every reader, to a greater or less degree, according to the power of his imagination, lives through in mind the experiences of the characters of whom he reads. If those experiences

are vile and degrading, they as surely contaminate the thought as the records of noble and heroic deeds stimulate the mind to higher endeavor.

Unluckily, it is true that those who would be least injured by pernicious books are the ones who have no desire to read them—and there are such, let scoffers say what they may—who would as deliberately wade through a mud-puddle as to read a book whose pages were known to contain impure thoughts and images. To be perfectly logical, is there any good reason why one should not be as fastidious about the company he keeps in books as in real life? Why, then, should one associate with an ink-begotten hero beyond the page where his communications are unsavory, or such as would not be tolerated in select circles in real life? But with the strange inconsistency of mortals, characters, who, in flesh and blood, would

be ejected from a respectable house by primitive methods, when typographically incarnated, are coddled in ladies' boudoirs in thousands of homes and allowed to associate with the younger members of the household.

Not long ago a well-known English author, who knows how to write clean stories that hold his readers rigid with interest, wrote for a popular magazine an article on his "favorite novel." With British candor, which might have served a better end than to increase the circulation of the book he singled out, he confessed that his favorite was—well, the same reason which might have justified him in withholding its name will restrain the present writer. For the benefit of those who have read the book, it may be known by these signs: It is chiefly celebrated for its indecency, and a somewhat neatly-turned sentence about a tear

with which the recording angel blotted out the entry of an oath. Hardly a day had passed, after the magazine mentioned had reached its subscribers, when there was a great demand for the favorite book of the English novelist. One bright young miss, in her teens, could hardly be dissuaded from borrowing it, though she was assured that two random pages had sufficed her adviser, and two would undoubtedly fill her with such disgust that she would never open the book again. It is the old story of the Garden of Eden, full of all manner of wholesome fruit, and Eve "sighing for a knurly pippin," which subsequently deprives her of Paradise.

No one can deny that there are more good books than any one man or woman can read properly; but from the clamorous ado that is sometimes made over the pippin variety of literature and the

excessive adulation of some particular flavor which an expert taster professes to discover in it, one would infer that it was the most marvelous growth in the whole Eden of Literature. There are probably few sentences in the English language which have been so extravagantly lauded as the one penned by the very reverend sentimental gusher—of whom mention has already been made. One cannot help wondering if half as much notice would have been taken of it had it occurred in a decent book. When it is possible to row out in a boat in a fresh river and pick all the water-lilies we can carry, why should we wade neck-deep through a miry bog to pick one, different in no respect, save for its slimy stem?

We should indignantly resent the audacity of one who came into our house and hung on our walls pictures that filled us

with loathing. But the offense of the morbid realist, who hangs repulsive pictures in the mind, is far greater, for these cannot be taken down and scarcely may be veiled by the merciful years.

In spite of all quibbling and fencing in the name of art, we are facing a grave problem in the present tendency on the part of authors to write and translate books which are known among publishers as "off color." There may be no significance in the fact that the nations which have produced the most miry masterpieces of literature are the most morally corrupt nations of the earth, but the fact may well justify a little more caution on the part of authors, publishers, and readers. Now that it is widely understood that nothing swells the circulation of a book so much as qualities which challenge its suppression, even the righteous author—especially if there is some

poverty mingled with his righteousness —is sorely tempted to slacken the reins of propriety, while second-, third-, and fourth-rate authors dispense with reins altogether.

If there were some method of ascertaining how many sins have never been committed simply because they were never thought of, and how many sins have been due to the suggestions of some abnormal author cursed with a corruptly versatile imagination, one might begin to measure the evil that an evil book can accomplish. Were man not an imitative animal, from childhood up, part of the dangers of pernicious literature would be lessened. But nearly half of the average man's acts —good or bad—are performed in an absolute, though unconscious, mimicry of the acts of others, as are the piratical exploits of youthful readers of dime novels. Those who have made a study of divorce

statistics assure us that every divorce is a suggestion—even a strong hint—to another divorce, and in States where a bewildering variety of reasons for divorce are allowed and flauntingly advertised, married people are very noticeably influenced by the suggestions in the air and gradually come to regard their vows as very conditional and brittle bonds, which they may snap asunder at the first chafing.

One of Du Maurier's *Punch* cartoons portrays an aunt, telling a story to her little nephew, winding up with this moral: "But, good little Tommy, you never got into the bath with all your Sunday clothes on, did you?" "No," said little Tommy, thoughtfully, "I never did, but I will now, though."

The same contagion of suggestion lurks in the experiences recorded in yellow literature, and one of the most hopless fea-

tures of the case is the victim's unconsciousness of his own demoralization. There is—in nearly every instance—a literary nausea like that accompanying the first experiment with tobacco, which follows the first reading of a rank book. But with the tenth or twelfth volume of the kind, some readers have passed the shockable stage. They have seen "the thing too much," and find life stale before they are out of their twenties.

"You won't mind it at all after you have been in here half an hour," was the grimly consoling assurance of the officer who accompanied Kennan to a Siberian prison, in which the air was so vile that the explorer knew no adjective that would adequately describe it. Such, in brief, is the experience of those who breathe for any length of time the air wafted from the guano Parnassus of literature.

Some of its ethical maxims the world

outgrows, but there are others that are as unchangingly true as the simple facts of the multiplication table. It was an understanding of such facts which inspired Paul's counsel to the Philippians—"Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things."

The freedom of the press is one of our most vaunted blessings. But our boast may end in shame if one by one every veil that should screen the sanctities of life and protect us from a useless revelation of its atrocities is torn aside. What the brown, worm-inhabited earth would be without its mantle of grass or snow, or the sky without clouds, twilight, or darkness, that would existence become without reserves, illusions, or ideals.

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